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CONTENTS

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Where is Bevan Going?

A CAMPAIGN IS AFOOT outside Labour Party circles to build up Mr. Bevan. A typical comment on him was that of a political columnist of the *Empire News* on Sunday, December 9th.

"Nye was superb on Wednesday. The speech was witty, persuasive, colourful and trenchant. It held the House enthralled. By comparison, Hugh Gaitskell sounded like a tired and irritable schoolmaster."

Of course one reason for this boost of Bevan is to score off Gaitskell, and make trouble in the Labour Party—it takes attention off the Tories' troubles over Eden. But there is more to it than that. Some weeks ago, the *Economist*, which owes no particular allegiance to the Tory Party, being more concerned with the wider problem of keeping British Capitalism safe, wrote that Bevan—"might be capable of being a very good Foreign Secretary indeed." (*Economist* 6/10/56.)

A writer in the Tory *Sunday Times* (9/12/56) paid his tribute to the "sheer artistry" of Bevan's speech on Suez and added the significant comment that Mr. Bevan "comes out of the crisis with a new stature, *not only among his own party.*"

A day or two earlier the *Daily Mail* (7/12/56) had featured an article by Mr. Henry Fairlie in which he conceded to Bevan many qualities of a great Foreign Secretary and remarked that the idea of Bevan as Prime Minister in a Coalition Government had been publicly ventilated during the recent Suez crisis.

We can be sure that it is not only Bevan's speeches and his enhanced authority in the Labour Party that have caused this speculation about his future as Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary; another factor must have been the Suez fiasco. It has long been appreciated by Britain's rulers that it is very unwise, if not positively dangerous, to go to war without first securing a large measure of agreement and support, in the country as a whole if possible, and certainly at the top, either through a Coalition Government (as in the two world wars) or by consultation as in the Korean War. Sir Anthony Eden failed to get this and with the Labour Party working up opposition to the whole venture the Government's chances of success in Suez were inevitably lessened. Bevan, as the Labour Party's choice for future Foreign Secretary, thus becomes of increased importance—added to which is his undoubted ability to influence the workers in a way his leader Gaitskell cannot.

Bevan's Labour admirers, and his virulent detractors in Tory ranks, may think it absurd that Bevan could be considered as a useful instrument for British Capitalism in the critical times it now faces, but this is only because they have failed to consider the facts of Labour Party history in war and crisis.

THE UNGRATEFUL WORKERS

POVERTY OR MISERY?

THE LABOUR PARTY & THE SUEZ CANAL

DAY TO DAY RUNNERS OF CAPITALISM

NOTES BY THE WAY

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British Capitalism has been singularly lucky in its Labour Party over the years: though doubtless "luck" is not the proper word for the way in which a movement of rebellious discontent that was at first feared has been neutralised and tamed until it has become an indispensable prop for the existing social system. Through an astute use of flattery and honours, the appointment of trade unionists as Justices of the Peace and to innumerable official committees, the propertied class have been able to rely on the Labour Party in every big crisis. The first World War produced its Tory-Liberal-Labour Coalition Government with full Labour Party and trade union support for recruiting and the war effort—and this was repeated as a matter of course in the second war. The financial and commercial crisis of 1931 brought top Labour Leaders, including MacDonald, Snowden, and Thomas, into the "national" government though this time the Labour Party was split and the rest went into impotent opposition.

And through all the ups and downs of the past 40 years the propertied class have weathered the storms and kept their position far better than propertied groups in many other countries; escaping the violent upheavals of German Hitlerism, Italian Fascism, Franco's civil war and Russian Stalinism and this comparatively peaceful passage of British Capitalism has been achieved with indispensable aid from men whose politically turbulent early careers gave them a hold on working class loyalty, men like Aneurin Bevan. It is often overlooked that the late Lloyd George (whom Lenin saw as a possible leader of revolution in Britain) was once more loathed and feared by the landed and monied men for his savage demagogic speeches and policies than ever Bevan has been. And MacDonald, Snowden, Cripps, Bevin and Attlee started their upward careers in the Labour movement preaching doctrines that induced detestation and apprehension in Capitalist circles.

How does Bevan shape up for such a role? He has most of the attributes—a brilliant speaker, able to arouse emotions, ambitious for the Premiership, unfettered by attachment to any rigid theory, and with the reputation (unmerited of course) of being a man of peace and friend of the workers. Though he supported the second world war and the Korean war, and was an active supporter of the Labour Government's great re-armament programme and the Atom bomb, his followers can yet see him as a dependable enemy of war. Above all he has the asset of being more enthusiastically received by masses of workers than is any other figure in the Labour Party or trade union movement.

His potential usefulness to Capitalism does not rest on the unlikely supposition that he would desert the Labour Party, but on the recognition that in certain kinds of crisis a Labour Government alone or in Coalition is the best insurance Capitalism can have lest worse befall.

To keep its popularity with the members, the Labour Party would have to offer sops such as a few more schemes of nationalisation and some social reforms, but British Capitalism was long ago taught by experience that some price has to be paid for security.

And those who feared the early rebel Bevan have had plenty of assurances that he is not out to destroy Capitalism.

Speaking in the House of Commons on July 2, 1951, he put his view that "if there is a social purpose to be accomplished of any importance, either the State should do it or the State should make it possible for private enterprise to do it; but what the State should not do is to be inert and to surround private enterprise with such inhibitions that private enterprise cannot do it." (Hansard, July 2, 1951. Col. 1915).

He repeated it in an article in the *Daily Express* (16 and 17 February, 1956) in the form of an assurance that his conception ("dismiss it as Socialist if you like") comprises "a thorough-going programme of enlarged public ownership" but "does not go on to say that private enterprise has no part to play in modern society."

In 1949 in a speech at Newport he made the claim that "Socialism" is good for business men.

"Even private enterprise works better under the beneficent guidance of a Socialist government. That proves that Socialism is a good thing and it is beginning to dawn on some business men."—(*Daily Herald*, 28th March, 1949.)

Of course Bevan's mixture of State Capitalism, private Capitalism, and social reform, is nothing to do with Socialism. He is not a Socialist and never indicates in his speeches and writings that he ever clearly saw what it is all about. Like Lloyd George, whom he is said to take as a model, he is a nationalist, believing that British Capitalism can solve its problems and prosper under the right party and right Prime Minister—Bevan. He never thinks in terms of international action for Socialism by the working class, but always in terms of the place of Britain in the World: as he wrote in the *Daily Express* (February 17, 1956) "in the name of Britain and the hope that she will once more play a leading role in world history."

Is this a Prophecy?

The reader may wonder and ask if we are forecasting what must be. The answer is No! Nothing like this has to happen. Capitalism does not have to continue and it does not have to happen that a Labour Party shall help to save it again as it has done before. There does not have to be a working class so enmeshed in leader worship that they can be counted on to follow. There can be instead a growing Socialist movement, destroying leader worship as it advances, working internationally against all Capitalist groups and their wars and working for Socialism. There will be no place in it for policies like those of Aneurin Bevan.

H.

DORKING AND HORSHAM

Members and sympathisers in the Dorking and Horsham districts who are interested in groups that are being formed, are asked to get in touch with the Central Branch Secretary at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

TWO PAMPHLETS ON RUSSIA

"THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION—Its Origin and Outcome," (Published by the Socialist Party of Canada, obtainable from S.P.G.B. 50 pages, 6d., post free 8d.)

"RUSSIA SINCE 1917," (114 pages, 1/-, post free 1/3).

DAY-TO-DAY RUNNERS OF CAPITALISM

Part 2

THE complete lack of grasp of the general political situation from a Socialist point of view, screams from every line of Driberg's reports. Krushchev, having taken the Labour Party to task for being "reformist" and failing to educate the masses in the "revolutionary spirit," Driberg enters the defence by saying "though Britain had certainly not been transformed into a Socialist State, the Labour Government had taken substantial steps towards Socialism—taking basic industries into public ownership, introducing comprehensive social security measures, and so on."

The only "revolutionary spirit" in which workers need educating will come from a knowledge of their class position under the wages system and a realisation on their part of the need to use that knowledge to vote for the abolition of this system. Far from drawing attention to the real nature of Capitalism, at every election the so-called Communist Party uses exactly the same stunts as the rest of them, promising houses, jobs and peace, etc.

As we stated earlier, to the Labour Party nationalisation means Socialism, but perhaps workers are beginning to see that the so-called "public ownership" is two steps forward, three steps back and does not mean that they OWN any more of the means of living than they ever have.

The term "social security" has a nice sound but only INSECURE people need it. No reform can give workers security because their insecurity does not arise from lack of reforms but is basic to their wage slave position under Capitalism.

Krushchev's idea is clearly that of an ignorant mass of people having their interests looked after and their problems solved for them by the right kind of Government. If workers had understood Socialism in 1945 they would not have voted for the Labour Party yet Krushchev assumes the existence of an electorate which wanted Socialism and because the Labour Government did not bring it about, thought they would try the Tories. His actual words were "Yet the Labour Government lost the next elections. Why? Because they did not use their power in the interests of the working-class, and the working-class therefore became indifferent to the Labour Party. The workers' conditions in those nationalised industries you speak of didn't change greatly. Therefore the workers saw no difference between the Labour and Tory parties." He then added "the Labour Government did not change the State institutions set up by previous Governments, or create conditions in which the social structure could be changed. Therefore, the working-class was not interested."

It would be interesting to hear from Mr. Krushchev, in what respect "the State institutions" of Russia differ from those which typify Capitalism everywhere. Except for the fact that there is only one Party which exercises dictatorial control, the nature of the institutions, i.e., private property, inheritance, law making and enforcing bodies such as law courts, prisons, police and judges; also a monetary system, army, navy, and air force, etc., remain the same.

The Labour Government did not take office to change the State institutions of Capitalism, but simply to use these institutions to run Capitalism and to make what adjustments they found necessary to run it more efficiently. The one remaining necessary condition for changing "the social structure" is an understanding of why this change is necessary on the part of the majority of the working-class. Living under Capitalism and coming into contact with Socialists' ideas will bring this condition about, but no Government can "create" it.

After the erection and demolition of a few more Aunt Sallies in connection with the Labour Party, Krushchev switched to the so-called Communist Party, saying "the Communist Party is not a mass Party in Britain at present because of certain historical conditions. But times are changing: a revolutionary situation will arise; and the Communist Party will use this situation to educate the mass of the workers and lead them to the victory of Socialism." Far from their being able to educate anyone the British Communist Party would not know a "revolutionary situation" if they saw one.

Hypocrisy Enshrined

This next quotation from Mr. Krushchev will sicken any worker who seriously reflects on it. "Being revolutionaries and Communists, we are interested in the international solidarity of the workers; but we DO NO MORE than GIVE GOOD ADVICE to parties that need it. Every country has its own way. We stick to the principle of strict NON-INTERVENTION. Our work is based on the slogan of PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP. There are various ways of transition. Let us be patient." (Our emphasis).

The rulers of Soviet Capitalism stand condemned out of their own mouths. The bloody butchery of workers in Hungary since Krushchev made this statement, and on a smaller scale in East Berlin before it, demonstrates how utterly meaningless words are to these henchmen of Capitalism.

Contrasts in Capitalism

The remainder of the interview was largely devoted to comparing methods of running this system. The advantages of two parties as opposed to one, crime and punishment, propaganda technique, and so on. Krushchev had explained that Russia is composed of a number of "sovereign republics" and when Driberg asked "could there be capital punishment for murder in one republic, and not in another?" Krushchev replied "it is quite possible. Every national republic has its own criminal code. Even now, there are some differences, but there is some co-ordination." This to Socialists is a very telling statement, for Socialism and national republics are contradictory terms. Socialism cannot exist in one country only, because it involves a WORLD class-struggle, and a world solution to problems arising from this world system. Socialism is the direct opposite of everything national. Krushchev's reply poses a contradiction within a contradiction—Socialism in one country itself divided into separate national bodies, each with "criminal" codes and legislature of its own.

Another degree in which British Capitalism varies from Russian is that in the House of Commons there is time for questions and in the supreme Soviet there is not. Russian workers, we are told, can ask questions at Party and trade union meetings. For an exploited class to be allowed to ask questions indeed sounds a good thing but in neither country do workers have any real redress within Capitalism because the problems are such that they cannot be solved little by little. In fact although a lot of questions have been asked, the problems housing, jobs, security, and peace, etc., will last as long as the system which generates them.

One question Mr. Krushev was called on to answer came from an old woman who lived on a collective farm and had lost a plot of land because her sons who had worked on the farm had gone to work in a factory. This is a private property question and clearly has nothing to do with land being held in common. The woman had asked other officials and after looking into it Krushev decided "she'd been given the correct answer first time." Another example was that of a mining engineer sent to jail for three years "for negligent supervision" after "a

worker in a pit that he was in charge of had fallen and died." Mr. Krushev asked the "higher judicial authorities to investigate it."

We are assured at the end that the Press in Russia can now criticise top Party Leaders and the crimes of the Stalin era have been "put right again by the twentieth Congress." Said Krushev "our aim is to prevent any repetition of the cult of the individual and to return to the Leninist position and methods." Any change that has taken place in Russia since Stalin is more apparent than real, still the H-bomb race goes on, still the struggle for world trade and, like all ruling classes, the Russian State Capitalists show no mercy to weaker powers that oppose them. The horror witnessed in Hungary gives the workers there little cause to rejoice at whatever "cult" persists in Russia, individual or otherwise.

While most workers all over the world have no understanding of Socialism they will tragically toy with alternative parties to run Capitalism and suffer the INEVITABLE CONSEQUENCES.

H. B.

POVERTY OR MISERY?

IN his book *Contemporary Capitalism*, Mr. Strachey echoes Bernstein in asserting that Marx held that the economic laws of Capitalism are such as to not only keep the standard of living of the working class down to a bare subsistence level but owing to the downward pressure which these "laws" exert, force this subsistence level even lower. This leads Marx to conclude, says Mr. Strachey again echoing Bernstein, that vast overproduction, leading to a final economic collapse and violent revolution would inevitably follow. Like Bernstein Mr. Strachey never offers to really explain what these laws are, how they are supposed to operate.

Mr. Strachey hangs his misrepresentation of Marx on the slender thread of two quotations of a few lines and isolated from the context in which they occur. The first is from the *Communist Manifesto*. It reads: "The modern labourer . . . instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the conditions of existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth."

But the *Manifesto* was largely a propagandist pamphlet written in highly generalised and scathing language, hardly the place a cull a few lines from as crucial proof of what Mr. Strachey deems the heart of Marxism, i.e., ever worsening poverty for the mass and ultimate economic collapse. Surely on "so vital a matter" Mr. Strachey had the whole of Marx's detailed analysis from which to chose but he would not have found there what he so obviously wanted to find.

Actually what Marx and Engels were pointing out in the last but one paragraph in section one of the *Manifesto* from which Mr. Strachey quotes was that the industrial progress of Capitalism not only places the worker in economic jeopardy but one of its consequences is to deprive him of a livelihood and so compel him to live beneath the conditions of existence of his own

class and as they add "instead of feeding the bourgeoisie he has to be fed by them."

According to Mr. Strachey's interpretation of this, Marx envisaged the end product of Capitalist development as the conversion of the mass of producers of surplus value, into idle consumers of surplus products that is if in such a state of affairs there was anything left to consume. Mr. Strachey cannot of course point to anything in Marx's economic analysis of Capitalism which remotely suggests such a conclusion.

Marx in fact never speaks of a law of absolute poverty, nor does he make the growth of poverty a necessary outcome of Capitalist development. For Marx poverty is not something absolute and physical but something relative and social. That Marx left no room for doubt on this matter is seen in a work written incidentally before the *Manifesto*, *Wage Labour and Capital*. On (p. 33) he states:

"A house may be large or small; as long as the neighbouring houses are likewise small it satisfies all social requirements. But let there arise next to the little house, a palace and the little house shrinks to a hut. The little house now makes it clear that its inmate has no social position to maintain or but a very insignificant one; and however high it may shoot up in the course of civilisation, if the neighbouring palace rises in equal or greater measure the occupant of the relatively little house will always find himself more uncomfortable, more dissatisfied, more cramped within his four walls."

For Marx the social conditions of one class cannot be determined except by reference to some other class or classes. Thus he declares, "our wants and pleasures are measured in relation to society, not in the objects which serve their gratification." In answer to the assertions in Mr. Strachey's book (p. 101) that Marx held that Capitalism condemns the working class to a perpetual lowering of wages, Marx replies on (p. 33) in *Wage Labour and Capital*, by stating, that a rapid growth of productive capital involves an appreciable rise in wages. That he

does not consider poverty an essential condition for Socialism is made quite clear on (p. 39) of the same pamphlet when he declares, "the most rapid growth of capital however much it may improve the material life of the worker, does not abolish the antagonism between his interests and the interests of the Capitalist."

To Mr. Strachey's unwarrantable assertion that Marx believed in an iron or fixed law of wages, Marx in the work, *Value, Price and Profit*, says, "the value of labour (power) itself is not a fixed but a variable magnitude, even supposing the value of all other commodities to remain the same."

On pages 87 and 88 of the same work, Marx, treating of the struggle between Capitalists and workers over the division of social wealth, states, although we can determine the minimum of wages i.e. the essentials necessary to maintain the worker physically, we cannot fix their maximum. The struggle between employers seeking to gain the greatest possible profit and workers striving for the highest possible wages, resolves itself, says Marx, "into a question of the respective powers of the combatants."

To Mr. Strachey's assertion that Marx held that workers' wages represent bare subsistence, or to put alternatively are the cost of mere replacement of physical energies used up in the productive process, Mr. Strachey, if he cares, to read *Capital* (p. 631), will find Marx stating the working class "can extend the circle of their enjoyments, can make some additions to their consumption fund of clothes, furniture, etc., and can lay by small reserve funds of money. But just as little do better clothes, food and a larger peculium do away with the exploitation of the slave, so little do they set aside that of the wage worker."

Marx then made it crystal clear that the value of labour-power is determined by two elements; one merely physical and the other he calls, historical and moral. By the latter he meant that in different periods and in different countries—even in different localities, there is a traditional standard of life which workers feel is indispensable to their existence. Hence any attempt to lower it will provoke the strongest resistance. Thus, when workers combine in trade unions to maintain or increase wages, they are not fighting hopelessly against some iron law of wages, which must assert itself in the long run but are expressing the historical and moral element involved in the value of labour-power and so helping "to mould the traditional standards of the future." Marx was aware of the tendency of wages to rise under the impact of capital accumulation. He certainly never believed, however, that wage increases would absorb the whole of profits, never reach a point "where the system itself is threatened." (*Capital*, p. 632).

On the other hand, said Marx, there are tendencies in Capitalism which set up a strong counter resistance to rising wages. These tendencies include, the substitution of mechanical power for labour power, the recurring crises of the system and to a lesser degree the export of capital to places where cheaper sources of labour power are available. Thus increased unemployment will lead to increased competition for jobs and downward pressures on existing wage levels. While Marx believed that trade unions could have a retarding effect on these tendencies, he did not believe they could reverse their direction. (*Value, Price and Profit*, p. 93).

When Marx speaks in the same pamphlet (p. 92) of the general tendency in Capitalism to sink rather than raise wages it can be seen from the foregoing that such a tendency is a marked feature of Capitalism and inseparable from a wages system.

Marx, however, in spite of Mr. Strachey's profound misunderstanding on the matter, never equates these tendencies to the totality of Capitalist social relations. Marx true to his own historic standpoint, reveals the powerful refracting effects on these tendencies by the social factor of the class struggle. For Marx there are no laws of motion of Capitalist society existing in isolation, there are only laws of motion as modified by human beings. Mr. Strachey not understanding this, does not understand the historical method of Marx.

Which brings us to Mr. Strachey's other quotation, making a grand total of two. This quotation is from the Eden and Cedar Paul translation of *Capital*. Because Mr. Strachey has made his central point an assertion that Marx believed in some process of a growth of absolute poverty, he has good reasons for using this particular translation rather than the fourth German edition, translated by Samuel Moore and edited by Frederick Engels. In this last-named edition the quotation given by Mr. Strachey is: "Along with the constantly diminishing number of the magnates of capital who usurp and monopolise all advantages of this process of transformation, grows the mass of misery, slavery, degradation, exploitation . . ." (*Capital*, p. 789 Swan Sonnenchein edition). In the Eden and Cedar Paul translation the word "misery" is altered to poverty. One might also point out that in this same edition, several words are arbitrarily and erroneously changed. The word misery it might also be mentioned is used in the Kerr edition and in the Allen and Unwin edition translated by Dona Torr. This edition was highly praised by Mr. Strachey himself. Also in *Value, Price and Profit* (p. 93) Marx speaks of the miseries imposed by Capitalism not the poverty, etc.

It may also be noted that the quotation given by Mr. Strachey is merely the briefest of passing references on the subject of Marx. One wonders why Mr. Strachey didn't quote from *Capital* (p. 661, Swan Sonnenchein edition) where Marx clearly and explicitly states what he means by misery. But then Mr. Strachey would not have been able to prove what he wanted to prove.

Dealing with the effects of capital accumulation on the working class, Marx states:

"They mutilate the labourer into a fragment of a man, degrade him to the level of the appendage of a machine, destroy every remnant of charm in his work and turn it into a hateful toil; they estrange him from the intellectual potentialities of the labour process in the same proportion as science is incorporated in it as an independent power. . . . It follows therefore in proportion as capital accumulates the lot of labourer, *be his wages high or low*, must grow worse. It establishes an accumulation of misery corresponding with the accumulation of capital. Accumulation of wealth at one pole is, therefore, accumulation of misery, agony, toil, slavery, ignorance, brutality, mental degradation at the opposite pole." (Italics ours.)

Marx then does not relate misery to the sum of wages a worker gets but to the social conditions of his existence. Engels in a letter to Bebel (March 1875) rebukes those people who falsify Marx by stating he believed in an iron law of wages. Engels also says that "Marx showed in

Capital that the laws regulating wages are very complicated . . . they are in no sense iron but very elastic."

Mr. Strachey did not always accept the view that Marx equated the value of labour power with a bare subsistence level, or the mere physical replacement of working energies. In his book, *The Nature of Capitalist Crisis* (p. 197) he associated himself with the following: "the value of labour-power is the sum of commodities, necessary to keep the worker in health and strength and enable him to keep his children in equal health and strength and technical ability." Neither are we given the slightest hint in that work of one of the central assertions which Mr.

Strachey makes in his latest book which is that Marx held that such would be the level of poverty of the workers that they would be unable to efficiently perform their working tasks.

Must we conclude that when Mr. Strachey was a "Marxist" he did not really understand Marxism and only understands it now he isn't? Or could it be truly said that he has never really understood Marxism at any time?

E. W.

(In the next issue we shall deal with Mr. Strachey's fantastic assertion that Marx was at bottom a Malthusian.)

THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE SUEZ CANAL

In view of the attitude taken up by the Labour Party in the Suez dispute it is worthwhile casting the mind back to the attitude of Labour Governments in 1924 and 1929 on this matter.

The *Labour Magazine* for August, 1929, under the heading "Labour and Egypt," contains the following quotation from a dispatch sent by Ramsay MacDonald in 1924, as Labour Foreign Secretary:

"No British Government in the light of these experiences (meaning the war) can divest itself wholly even in favour of an ally, of its interest in guarding such a vital link in British negotiations (meaning, of course, the Suez Canal). Such a security must be a feature of any agreement come to between the two Governments, and I see no reason why accommodation is impossible, given goodwill. The effective co-operation of Great Britain and Egypt in protecting these negotiations, might, in my view, have been ensured by a treaty of close alliance. The presence of a British force in Egypt provided for by such a treaty, freely entered into by both parties on an equal footing, would in no way be incompatible with Egyptian independence. Whilst it would be an indication of the special close and intimate relations between the two countries, and their determination to co-operate in a matter of vital concern to both. It is not the wish of His Majesty's Government that the force should in any way interfere with the functions of the Egyptian Government or encroach upon Egyptian sovereignty, and I emphatically said so." (Pages 176-177.)

It will be noticed that this outlook is much the same as that put forward by the present Tory Government. However, negotiations fell through but the problem came up again during Labour's 1929-1930 period of office. The *Labour Magazine* for September, 1929, contains the proposals made to Egypt by Henderson, the Labour Foreign Minister. Here is an extract from these proposals:

"An undertaking on the part of Egypt that if she requires military instructors these shall be British; when the British military forces now in Egypt are removed and certain British forces are permitted by Egypt to be maintained on Egyptian territory in the vicinity of the Suez Canal for the protection of that waterway, the presence of these forces is not to prejudice in any way the sovereign rights of Egypt; an undertaking that the Egyptian Government will, as a rule, when engaging the services of foreign officials, engage British subjects" (page 211).

The summary of the proposals concludes with the following:

"modification of any treaty based on the proposals to be admissible only after the treaty has been in force for a period of 25 years."

The article adds that Mr. Henderson said that these proposals are "the extreme limit to which the Government is prepared to go."

Thus the Labour Governments of 1924 and 1929 wanted British forces to remain on Egyptian territory to safeguard the Suez Canal, and the 1929 treaty was to secure that this was so for the following 25 years—and it also included only British military instructors and British officials! What are the "sovereign rights" of a country in the eyes of Imperialists?

The November, 1929 issue of the *Labour Magazine* had an article on "The Labour Government's offer to Egypt" containing a typical piece of Imperialist hypocrisy:

"Later, in the detailed working out of the proposals, we find that, while the occupation of Egypt is to end, the occupation of the banks of the Suez Canal is to continue. The Canal is indisputably Egyptian territory. In fact, however, Egypt sees little, and thinks, less of it. The Canal is in Egypt, but not of Egypt. The Egyptian life in the main goes on unheeding of the vast international traffic that traverses the waterway from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean. The grip of a country's capital by foreign troops is one thing; the policing of a vastly important international highway is quite another. The former makes a mockery of national independence; the other—except on doctrinaire grounds—has but little relevancy to the question of national independence" (pages 303-304).

You see it all depends upon whether you look at the question from the point of view of Egyptian nationalism or British Imperialism. The Egyptians contend that as the canal is in Egypt it is in Egypt and consequently they have been trying to kick the British out since 1880. We have been taught that the Thames is an International highway, but if the Egyptians suggested sending a force here to protect it we very much doubt if the Labour Party would argue that the Thames is in England but not of England.

Finally, puzzle; find the difference between the outlook of the Labour and the Tory parties on the Suez Canal question; or, alternatively, which is the greatest humbug.

GILMAC.

"I am told that if I get a rise the goods I make will not sell, because Germany will make them more cheaply, and I shall be worse off.

So if I want to keep my standards of living up, I have got to keep it down. If I work for less than my German counterpart, I shall be better off. Then he will want to work for even less, so that he can be better off than I am. Finally, we shall all work for nothing and live like Lords."

This letter from a reader was published in the *Daily Mirror* some three years ago.

THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

(Concluded)

THE Congress of 1870 had to be abandoned owing to the outbreak of the Franco-German war. It had been brewing for some time, fostered on the one side by the expansionist policy of the Napoleonic regime, with its stock-jobbing supporters, and on the other side by the capitalist development of Germany, which was unifying the country under the domination of Prussia.

It was a difficult time for the International, with its mixed support, including many who were still moved by patriotic feelings. Its position was not improved by pronouncements upon what constituted an offensive and defensive war, largely inspired by a hatred of Bonapartism, which saw in Napoleon the principal trouble maker in Europe.

The General Council issued an address on July 23rd, 1870, whose sentiments were to be reflected in the attitude of the Labour movement in subsequent wars, notably in 1914 and 1939.

All governments who take part in wars allege that they are acting on the defensive, and workers on opposing sides have been induced to shed their blood upon battlefields on the specious claim that they have been fighting a war against aggression, though the latest manifestation, the Suez crisis, is put under the heading of a probable aggression! Marx, who wrote the July address, cannot be absolved from the evil consequences to which this attitude has led. The address contained these comments:

"If the German working class allow the present war to lose its strictly defensive character and to degenerate into a war against the French people, victory or defeat will prove alike disastrous."

Once a war commences and workers are thrown into the conflict they have neither the information nor the power to do any limiting. When a war has started no one can successfully predict its result, except misery for the working-class of both victor and vanquished. The Address goes on to make a prophecy that vastly overestimates the influence of the more advanced members of the International and the level of understanding of the workers:

"The principles of the International are, however, too widely spread and too firmly rooted amongst the German working class to apprehend such a sad consummation. The voices of the French workmen have re-echoed from Germany. A mass meeting of workmen, held at Brunswick on July 16th, expressed its full concurrence with the Paris manifesto, spurned the idea of national antagonism to France, and wound up its resolutions with these words: 'We are enemies of all wars, but above all, of dynastic wars . . . With deep sorrow and grief we are forced to undergo a defensive war as an unavoidable evil; but we call at the same time, upon the whole German working-class to render the occurrence of such an immense social misfortune impossible by vindicating for the people themselves the power to decide on peace and war, and making themselves masters of their own destinies.'"

And the result of this support of a "defensive" war? The outcome of the war was the defeat of France; the establishment of the Commune of Paris in 1871, and the smashing up of working-class aspirations in France for many years; the building up of the German Empire, and the inauguration of the anti-Socialist laws that attempted to put the Socialist movement in Germany entirely out of the picture; the withdrawal of the English

trade unions from the International; finally an all round stepping up of the persecution of the International and its members on the ground that it was responsible for the Paris Commune. In fact, however, the International, as an organisation, had little to do with the Paris Commune, although some of its members played a considerable part in it.

A second Address was issued on September 9th, 1870, also written by Marx. This called attention to the fact that the German Government had now changed from the defensive to the offensive and was demanding the cession of territory, Alsace and Lorraine. This Address was an excellent summing-up of the developments and of the awakened imperialist hunger of the German capitalists, as well as its inevitable consequences, future wars of greater intensity. There was also a more realistic appreciation of what happens once the fervour of war is aroused, as the following quotation emphasises:

"The German working-class have resolutely supported the war, which it is not in their power to prevent, as a war for German Independence and the liberation of France and Europe from that pestilential incubus, the Second Empire. It was the German workmen who, together with the rural labourers, furnished the sinews and muscles of heroic hosts, leaving behind their half-starved families. Decimated by the battles abroad, they will be once more decimated by misery at home. In their turn they are now coming forward to ask for 'guarantees,—guarantees that their immense sacrifices have not been brought in vain, that they have conquered liberty, that the victory over the imperialist armies will not, as in 1815, be turned into the defeat of the German people; . . ."

Unfortunately, we cannot feel sanguine of their immediate success. If the French workmen amidst peace failed to stop the aggressor, are the German workmen more likely to stop the victor amidst the clangour of arms?"

That last paragraph is strikingly different from the views expressed in the first Address.

The International itself was divided over the attitude expressed in the first Address. Liebknecht and Bebel were opposed to war and, in the North German Reichstag they refrained from voting in favour of war. After the fall of the French Empire the Brunswick Committee, of which they were members, and other sections of the International took a stand against the annexation of Alsace and Lorraine, and were prosecuted by the German Government. Liebknecht and Bebel were tried in March, 1872, on a charge of high treason and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in a fortress. There was also a manifesto from Swiss sections of the International calling upon the workers to take up arms in defence of the French Republic against Germany, which, it claimed, now represented despotism and reaction. This manifesto emanated from the Anarchists.

After the fall of the Paris Commune the International exerted itself to find asylum for its refugees, and assisted them in every way that was possible. This was made more difficult by the quarrels and mutual recriminations of the refugees themselves.

The bulk of the work of the International during the war had fallen upon the shoulders of Marx. After the fall of the Commune his defence of it appeared under the title of *The Civil War in France*, which has become one of the Socialist classics.

Continued overleaf

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JANUARY



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE UNGRATEFUL WORKERS

HANNEN SWAFFER writing in the *People* (8/12/56) tells us that, following the Suez action, we are all in "for long years of hardship." This isn't quite true as Mr. Swaffer should know. The rich will still do well as always, and the poor will go on enduring the hardship they have always had. But the interesting point about Swaffer's article is his attack on the ungrateful workers who don't properly appreciate what the Labour Party has done for them.

"Gaitskell, Bevan, Wilson, and the rest know that our standard of life must get infinitely worse, and that, by a stupid paradox, the masses of the workers always tolerate more hardship imposed by the Tories than they will from their own side—from whom they always expect too much. In opposition, Labour can soften the economic blows upon the poor. In power, it is expected not only to avert hardship, but should almost usher in a new millennium. Democracy, ungrateful and dissatisfied, is a hard taskmaster."

Really Mr. Swaffer! Who is responsible for the workers believing that Labour governments meant "a new millennium?" Nobody but Gaitskell, Bevan, Wilson and Co. If, as is the literal truth, these gentlemen never intended to do anything more than keep the poor poor but "soften" their hardships, why did they not disclose this in their vote-catching electioneering?

Apparently the idea is that the workers are right to be dissatisfied up to the point of electing a Labour Government but should then stop being dissatisfied and should accept such Labour Government policies as "wage restraint" with a rising cost of living, without complaint.

Continued from page 7

Although there was no Congress in 1870 nor 1871, a private conference was held in London in September, 1871, under the shadow produced by the Commune. Only 23 delegates attended, nine of whom came from the Continent.

The split between the groups in Switzerland, one centred in Geneva and the other (Anarchist) centred in the Juras, had widened and become a pressing problem that needed immediate attention. In order to check the intrigues of the Bakounin group the General Council asked for more power. The Conference declared that whatever methods of organisation sections of the International had to adopt in countries where it could not be regularly organised, there must be no secret societies. It also resolved to accept adhesions from women's unions. While reasserting the position previously laid down on the necessity of political action, the Conference declared that the working-class must keep free from all political parties connected with the ruling class, and constitute its own political party to bring about the social revolution. It was also proposed that a special federal committee be set up in England to deal with trade unions, and local efforts were urged in industries where strikes occurred rather than leaving it to the General Council to institute action.

In 1872 the Anarchists worked hard to overthrow the authority of the General Council, the Jura section tried unsuccessfully to get control of the sections in Switzerland and Belgium. The Alliance (Anarchist), which was supposed to have been dissolved, was active in Italy and Spain. Lafargue sent reports from Madrid that attempts were being made by members of the Alliance to get control of the Madrid Federation of the International. These subversive activities determined Marx to attend the Hague Congress of 1872 and deal the Bakouninists a mortal blow. Bakounin was also to be at the Congress, but he did not turn up.

The Hague Congress had a very wide international representation. According to Lessner (who was a delegate), there were seventy-two delegates present. Sections were represented from the following countries: Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, England, the United States, Austria, Hungary, Australia, and Ireland.

A report covering the previous three years was submitted, and then the Congress got down to the real business, the position of the General Council. A resolution was moved giving the General Council power to suspend any union, section or federation until the next Congress. After a vigorous discussion, in which an amendment was moved that no section could be suspended without the consent of its federation, the resolution was carried by thirty-six votes to six, with fifteen abstaining. Then Engels, who was present as a delegate, dumbfounded the delegates by moving that the seat of the General Council be transferred from London to New York. In spite of heated argument, this resolution was carried by twenty-six to twenty-three; with nine abstentions.

This was the vote that practically put an end to the existence of the International, for although it struggled on for a time in the United States, it gradually faded away.

Before the Hague Congress ended Marx had the satisfaction of seeing the Anarchists removed from the organisation. Bakounin, Guillaume, and others were expelled; the Geneva federation was suspended, and it was agreed to publish the documents relating to the Alliance. Subsequently the Anarchists in Europe met at congresses of their own for a few years, claiming that they were the legitimate International Working Men's Association.

GILMAC.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," January, 1907)

Happy New Year?

Another year with all its possibilities—gone. Another year with all its possibilities—opening upon us. And—"a Happy New Year" comes lightly from the tongue in conventional salutation. "A Happy New Year"—and doubtless behind the greeting there is still some measure of real concern for the materialisation of the wish in the person addressed "A Happy New Year".—Why not? Why should not happiness be in the constant experience of all? Why should not happiness be the normal condition of everybody? Why should it not be as natural for everybody to exult in the joys of living as it is for them to breathe—why is it not?

Because—happiness is conditioned by the available supply of the necessities of life. Deny these to a man

and he cannot be happy. And the barest of these necessities are unobtainable (upon Capitalist authority—unobtainable) by at least a third of the people of this, the most prosperous of nations, while the rest of its working population—the population that builds up the "national" prosperity—only just manage, with infinite labour and anxiety, to maintain themselves in a condition of working efficiency.

That is the reason why happiness is not the normal condition of the working population. That is why they have not been happy in the dead year. That is why they cannot be happy in the year just commenced. To wish them "A Happy New Year" which we know they will not get is therefore rather dreary humour and about as useful as wishing the moon were green cheese.

LETTER TO COMMUNIST PARTY BRANCHES

The following letter is being sent to Communist Party branches whose address is known. Fellow Workers,

In view of the recent tragic happenings in the world, we urge your members to give our case their earnest consideration.

We are Marxists, basing our position on the investigations and conclusions of Marx.

Our sole object is the achievement of Socialism—a social system in which everything that is in or on the earth will be the common possession of all mankind. Everyone will be on an equal footing. There will be no frontiers, no buying and selling, and no privileged groups—except the old, the young, and the infirm.

We hold that Capitalism, the system under which goods are produced by the workers for the profit of a relatively small section of owners of the means of production, is now the system that prevails all over the earth; that it breeds wars, slumps, internecine conflicts, and misery for the mass of the people; that there is a constant class struggle going on between the owners of the means of produc-

tion, and those that operate them—the working class; that all the reforms put forward and fought for by well-meaning people have not touched the fringe of the problem of working class subjection but, instead, though even unintentionally, have pushed further away the day of emancipation; that, so long as the present system prevails there is no remedy for this state of affairs; the only way out is to abolish Capitalism and establish Socialism in its place; that State-ownership is not Socialism, but a particular form of Capitalism; that the workers must organise together internationally to attain their freedom from the conditions that oppress and frustrate them.

We will be glad to send a speaker to your Branch to explain in detail our position, and to answer your questions and criticism. Meantime we enclose two leaflets that may interest your members.

Hoping you will accept our offer to send a speaker.

We remain,

Yours for Socialism,
SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

CAN THE WORKERS UNDERSTAND SOCIALISM?

Is the working class a wash-out?—that is the question. A correspondent, in a very interesting letter, has put it this way. Socialism is a highly intellectual conception, and its acceptance involves a critical examination of the whole of one's ideas and beliefs. Now most people we meet are not highly intelligent, not critical, not very imaginative, and not even interested. Their conception of a better world is limited to the possibility of another pound a week in the present one. Sport and the daily newspaper give them all the romance they want. And yet, says the questioner, it is just these average, humdrum people who must be convinced that Socialism is both practicable and necessary. That is the poser.

If a recent lecturer on psychology is to be believed, the case is even worse. He said that just as physical growth slackens down at about the age of puberty, and shortly after ceases altogether, so does the intelligence slacken down and cease to develop at about the same age. After that, a person can acquire knowledge, but no more intelligence. It may be worth quoting his exact words:

"But with the average child, tests of innate intelligence show little appreciable improvement after the age of fourteen. During the war, tests of intelligence were applied to nearly 2,000,000 recruits for the American Army; it was then discovered that the average mental age of adults in the United States was barely fourteen. (Dr. Cyril Burt.)"

This is rather staggering. Are you and I no more intelligent than our boys just leaving school? Are our apprentices, messengers and office boys to put us to shame and confusion by claiming intellectual equality? The eminent professor comes to our rescue, for he says:—

"The paradox, however, may be easily explained away. The puzzle arises from confusing inborn or natural ability with acquired knowledge and attainments. The former ceases to improve; the latter may continue improving to the end of our days."

We breathe again. We shall not be a mockery for schoolboys. But if the professor is right, there seems to emerge a very important truth. If the intelligence does not grow after the age of 14, just as the body ceases a year or so later, surely we are all on an average level again. We are *all* mentally 14, mathematicians and knife-grinders, university lecturers and booking-clerks. The great difference lies in "acquired knowledge and attainments." So that the argument that Socialism is a system of thought that is only comprehensible by the highly intelligent, followed by the statement that the working-class is not more than five per cent. intelligent, is not in accord with facts.

It is not a lack of intelligence that is the stumbling block, it is something else. Consider these facts. This journal you are now perusing has a fairly steady circulation. Its very steadiness argues that the same people read it pretty regularly year after year. We can agree that the contents and character of this journal are such as to appeal to none but intelligent people. And yet the membership of the party is only about a tenth of the circulation. Surely intelligent people should take intelligent action, and if, as our questioner insisted, intelligence is to be the touchstone, the outlook is indeed gloomy. Fortunately, there appears to us to be other avenues of hope. First, there is the information given by Dr. Burt, quoted above: "acquired knowledge . . . may continue improving to the end of our days." It should be the function of a Socialist movement to see that the working class acquires a knowledge of its position in society, its evolution, its problems and its destiny. This knowledge can only be propagated by the spoken or written word, possibly supplemented by the cinematograph.

The case for Socialism can be put, and has been put, in language easily comprehensible by a normal boy of 14. It is possibly more easily apprehended then, for use and wont have not dulled the mind into the ruts of habit. According to the professor, he is as intelligent then as

he will ever be. It is in acquired knowledge that he will progress if at all. It should be the peculiar task of our movement to provide that knowledge, not in the form of a small journal appearing at intervals of a calendar month, but in every form the genius of man can devise. Capitalists who sell wares have discovered that man is a lazy animal, who moves when prodded often enough, who is most responsive to massed attack, and when subjected to a continuous reiteration of the same story. They have found that the mere appearance of one word, like "Bovril," on every railway station, every hoarding, and in every important periodical in the country, has a powerful psychological effect. It becomes by sheer familiarity and persistence, part of the "acquired knowledge" encountered by the questing human mind. When we see every railway station in the country, every hoarding, and in every important periodical in the country, has a powerful psychological effect. It becomes by sheer familiarity and persistence, part of the "acquired knowledge" encountered by the questing human mind. When we see every railway station in the country, every hoarding, and in every important periodical in the country, has a powerful psychological effect. It becomes by sheer familiarity and persistence, part of the "acquired knowledge" encountered by the questing human mind. When we see every railway station in the country, every hoarding, and in every important periodical in the country, has a powerful psychological effect. It becomes by sheer familiarity and persistence, part of the "acquired knowledge" encountered by the questing human mind.

His intelligence may have ceased to grow at 14, but it will be sufficient. We must take care of his acquired knowledge. He will be helped—if it is suitably drummed into him—by the obvious increasing bankruptcy of Capitalism, and the incessant attacks on the workers' standard of living. To take the course suggested lays a heavy burden upon the pioneers of a movement such as ours. That is the essential problem of the immediate present. How can the handful of enthusiasts who initiate the movement, get together sufficient funds to drench the working-class with its literature, to make its presence not only felt, but inescapable, to so familiarise them with its propaganda that misrepresentation becomes ludicrous? How can they, out of their poverty, engender this avalanche of publicity that is to overcome the workers' normal and natural inertia, and get them definitely on the move? Let every intelligent man, who has added to his stock of acquired knowledge by reading this article, answer for himself. Every reader a member, and every member a party worker, that is our object. We shall move in proportion to our effort.

W. T. H.

(Reproduced from "Socialist Standard," November, 1930.)

WOE TO THE VANQUISHED!

In the early years of the Bolshevik régime Lenin and his associates constantly referred to the Commune of Paris of 1871. They eulogised the defeated Communards and pilloried the murderous victors as examples of Capitalist ferocity that will never be forgotten.

Recent events in Budapest bring the Paris Commune to mind again on account of the similarities between the two tragedies.

In September, 1870, after the defeat of the French armies and the capture of Napoleon, Paris was invested

by the Germans and a four months siege commenced. In Paris a Republic was proclaimed and the National Assembly, headed by Thiers, appointed themselves as the Provisional Government and declared their intention of defending Paris to the end. Instead of doing so, however, they were privately parleying with the German Government, arranging for peace terms, including occupation of Paris by the Germans.

As a new elected Government gave no practical sign of their claim to defend Paris the Parisians became restive

and eventually an angry mob invaded the Town Hall, frightening the Government with their conflicting demands; some wanted a Committee of Public Safety, others a Revolutionary Commune similar to the Commune of 1793 in the first Revolution.

Eventually the Government left Paris and took up their residence at Versailles under the protection of the German Army. In Paris delegates were elected by universal suffrage and a Commune was formed in March, 1871, for the purpose of defending the city and bringing about a number of reforms in the administration of affairs.

The newly appointed Government at Versailles then arranged with the German Government for the release of a portion of the French Army to be used for the capitulation of Paris. The German Government was a willing party to the proposal of Versailles because, under the peace terms, Germany was to get a huge war indemnity and the rich provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. Without the capitulation of Paris the peace terms could not be implemented. So the German Army were cynical on-lookers, and held the side-lines, whilst the French Army, smouldering from recent defeats, was let loose upon its fellow countrymen.

The Communards, or as many called themselves, the Communalists, were a mixture of many outlooks; from simple nationalism to anarchism and the supporters of the International Working Men's Association. The defence was badly organised, many mistakes were made, but the self-sacrificing and heroic resistance of the people of Paris was almost unbelievable. When the ramparts were overwhelmed they fought from street to street in despairing heroism, sacrificing their lives for their beliefs.

When it was all over the Versailles Government entered upon an orgy of slaughter that had rarely been witnessed before. We will quote a description from a writer who was not favourably disposed to risings like the Commune, Godfrey Elton. This is what he writes in his book *The Revolutionary Idea in France 1789-1871* (Edward Arnold and Co., 1923).

"By the 28th [May] all was over: guns, cartridge boxes and uniforms littered the gutters of the poorer quarters, while in the doorways sad, stony-eyed women waited chin on hand for the men who would not come back: and elsewhere more elegant Parisiennes could be seen trilling with excited laughter as they raised the covering with the tips of their parasols and peered at the faces of the dead. The vengeance of the Party of Order was comprehensive and very dreadful, more dreadful than the vengeance of the Revolution had ever been, even in 1793; the shooting of men, women and children in hundreds and without trial was a massacre, not an execution, and not a few of the victims were buried before they were dead.

"All over Paris huge piles of corpses encumbered the streets and poisoned the air. The cemeteries of Paris could not receive a tithe of the butchered. Enormous ditches at Père Lachaise, Montmartre and Mont-Parnasse and the

trenches of the first siege at Charonne and elsewhere absorbed the unhonoured corpses, while women, widows and mothers, peered hopelessly among them for the dead that had been theirs. When the task of burial became too onerous they were burnt in the open air. It seems probable that 20,000 were killed during the few weeks immediately following the victory. The figure is unparalleled; in modern European history almost unimaginable. And the martyrdom of the prisoners was more dreadful than that of the executed; there was probably between 40,000 and 50,000 of them; and among them more than a thousand women and seventy children under fourteen; and the barbarity of their treatment can only be matched in the East; one must look to the Black Hole of Calcutta or to some of the Armenian massacres for an approach to the brutal savagery of the conquerors" (pages 171-172).

There is much more, but we have quoted enough to give a picture of what happened during and after the Paris rising. Many of the Parisians made their escape, some to England.

Now let us come up to date, to what happened in Budapest. Here again the mass of the people rose in revolt against their Government and the presence of foreign troops—the Russians. Here also a people of mixed outlooks were united in demanding the overthrow of the existing Government. The Government called in the aid of the Russians but there was a difference this time owing to changed circumstances. Whereas the Germans in 1871 were content to hold the ring, for the time being at least, the Russians came in with massed tanks and engaged in an orgy of slaughter, instructed by the Government that had claimed unwavering sympathy for the Communards of old. At the time of writing the fighting appears to be almost over but the pursuit and hanging of the vanquished continues with unabated brutality, and the refugees are giving their pitiful stories to the world. How deeply the Hungarians felt is shown by their attitude "Victory or death, bloody struggle or extinction."

In Karl Marx's book on the Commune, *The Civil War in France*, he concludes with these words:

"Workingmen's Paris, with its commune, will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society. Its martyrs are enshrined in the great heart of the working class. Its exterminators, history has already nailed to that eternal pillory from which all the prayers of their priests will not avail to redeem them."

The early Bolsheviks glorified the Commune but the wheel has turned full circle and the glorifiers are now the damned, painted with the same red brush as the exterminators of the Commune. We can also say of them that history has nailed them to an eternal pillory from which all their apologists will not avail to redeem them.

Working men and women who have mistakenly given their support to these false Communist Parties should take thought of this historical parallel and shake themselves free from their clay-footed idols. Stalin is dead but the brutal fake Communism continues.

GILMAC.

NOTES BY THE WAY

Fallen Idol Department

Every crisis stimulates a brisk trade in fallen idols and models of new supermen. The cynical commentators, shedding a few crocodile tears as they hurry away the clay feet and big heads to the junk yard or the House of Lords, get on with the fascinating task of telling the public who will clean up the mess and lead them on and on and up

and up to new crises. It is only a short while since the Tories were congratulating themselves on having got rid of the old war-horse, Churchill, and replacing him with the glamorous, virile, vote winning Eden. Now, if the Press reports are to be believed, they only don't get rid of Eden because they can't find anyone who even looks a likely candidate for supermanship. One commentator,

Mr. Alistair Forbes, of the *Sunday Dispatch* (who was early in the demand to shelve Churchill and put in Eden) now does not know which way to turn. In his Column on December 9, he says that Eden only remains leader because, though considered "the worst Prime Minister we could now have"—except Gaitskill—the Tories can't find a successor.

"Sir Anthony no doubt hopes that the usual Tory difficulties about finding someone who can be all things to all Tories, if not all men, will keep him in office. Certainly many Tories must feel that if only Mr. Jo Grimond was a Conservative and not a Liberal, their troubles would be over."

And before Labourites break out into derisive laughter about these troubles of the Tories they might recall that it is only a few years ago that many of them were wishing Eden would join the Labour Party.

Is it Inflation?

The answer, according to the "experts," is yes, or no, or maybe. The *Daily Telegraph* had an editorial with the title "Not Inflation." (8/12/56).

Next day the City Editor of the *Sunday Dispatch*, writing under the heading, "Inflation Prospect Brings in Buyers," explained why Stock Exchange prices had risen smartly:—

"No doubt it was the realisation that we are at the beginning of another period of inflation which persuaded some of the big institutional buyers to come into the market."

On the same day (December 9), another City Editor (*Empire News*) plumped for inflation, but the City Editor of the *Sunday Times* was cautiously non-committal. Under the heading "Inflation or Deflation?" he posed the question "Are we in for a period of renewed inflation or deflation?" He quoted the opinion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that "inflation was still the greatest danger," but asked "Is he right?"

His one really definite commitment was that the recent rumours of a further devaluation of the pound were "nonsense." We shall see; remembering that while no Government absolutely has to devalue its currency—it is merely a choice of methods for dealing with a problem—the temptation to do so may prove irresistible as it did for the Labour Government in 1949. Faced with trade union pressure for higher wages on the one side and increased foreign trade competition on the other, the present Government, like Attlee's in 1949, may decide for devaluation. It would solve nothing permanently, but it would give a fillip to exports and at the same time cause the cost of living to rise gradually and let wages rise with it.

In the meantime the Government goes on increasing the currency with another £50 million issue early in December. The *Financial Times* (7/12/56) expected that a further £50 million would be authorised before Xmas, which would constitute a highest ever, at £2,000 million, some four times the pre-war level.

Nehru's Cyprus and Hungary

Nehru won't discuss independence with the Naga tribesmen of Assam for the same reason that the British Government won't discuss with Makarios the independence of Cyprus—they are two areas of great strategic importance and in both areas the resistance has proved more obstinate than was expected. From Delhi the *Times* reports:—

"Mr. B. N. Datar, of the Home Ministry, replying to questions in Parliament, claimed that the movement for full independence in the Naga Hills district was 'fizzing out,' but he said that road convoys and outposts were still being sniped at, patrols ambushed, headmen and other loyal villagers kidnapped, and food and money extorted. . . . Some 686 malcontents had been killed since the beginning of operations and a further 146 were presumed killed."—(*Times*, December 8, 1956.)

Nehru's admirers have been embarrassed by his reluctance to condemn the Russian invasion of Hungary and his refusal to support a United Nations proposal for internationally supervised elections in that country. He has good reason for this attitude since the Russian excuse that they were asked to intervene by the Hungarian puppet government, is identical with the way Indian troops occupied large areas of Kashmir as a preliminary to the declaration that Kashmir is now part of India. As the *Economist* reports "to agitate in favour of Pakistan is to be guilty of sedition. A number of the leaders of the opposition Plebiscite Front are under arrest. Above all, Sheikh Abdulla himself remains in jail, where he has been for three years without trial." (*Economist*, November 24, 1956).

Now the Pakistani Foreign Minister accuses Nehru of wanting "to establish a brown imperialism." (*Daily Telegraph*, December 8, 1956). Of course Pakistan wants Kashmir itself and thinks a Plebiscite would lead to that result. Nehru, having pledged himself to a Plebiscite, now repudiates it.

Nehru has denied the charge that his preaching of principles that he won't practice can be described as a "Holier than Thou" attitude. One wonders why.

And what about Tito?

Some of the muddle-heads who, tired of Stalin worship, transferred their affections to that "good Democrat and Socialist Tito." Now a Belgrade lawyer has been sentenced to three years' hard labour "on a charge of spreading hostile propaganda by criticising the Yugoslav régime. The prosecutor in the district court . . . said that Djordjevic had declared, while in a barber's shop in February, 1955, that there was no freedom in Yugoslavia now, but there had been before the war." (*Manchester Guardian*, December 8, 1956).

That'll teach him that there is freedom under Tito!

The Black Inquisition and the Red

Cardinal Mindszenty, Catholic Cardinal in Hungary, who was kept in jail for seven years, described to the *Daily Mail* (December 8) how he was tortured to make him confess to his "Communist" jailers.

"For 29 full days it lasted—29 days and nights without sleep. The naked bulb in his cell was kept burning. When he collapsed from exhaustion he was promptly revived so that he would be deprived of even the rest of lost consciousness."

A few days earlier two Americans, who had been in Spain checking up on the brutality of the Government of that Catholic gentleman Franco, reported in the *People* (2/12/56), about a worker they called Eugenio.

"When he was taken to the Direccion General de Seguridad—Spain's equivalent to Gestapo H.Q.—no specific charge was laid against him. Eugenio described this underground hell. Many of the cells measure only three feet by three feet. It is impossible to lie down. Eugenio spent weeks in one of them curled up like a dog."

Are you Hungarian and under 18?

Last August when the Hungarian Government was making its first experiments with letting M.P.'s voice public criticisms of the way things were run, a woman deputy drew attention to the practice in textile factories of making young people under 18 work at night. The responsible Minister did not deny the charge that the law was being broken but said that workers under 18 could only be gradually exempted from night work. He made the point that a number of workers, including expectant mothers, had already been exempted and it would appear that he was defending the employment of some young workers at night on the ground of the difficulty of replacing them if the law were enforced fully and at once.

If there happen to be any Hungarian refugees under age 18 who find employment on British railways they may

find that in one respect things are just the same as at home.

The following is from the *Manchester Guardian* (December 8, 1956):

"The British Transport Commission was fined a total of £92 on 23 summonses, and ordered to pay 10 guineas costs at Bristol yesterday for employing fifteen junior railway firemen, aged under 18, on night work. It was convicted of five similar offences in March, when it was fined £10.

"Mr. P. C. Wreay, prosecuting, said that the evidence showed "a deliberate and continuous flouting" of the law. It was admitted that there were considerable staffing difficulties.

"Mr. M. Corkery, for the Commission, said that it was deeply concerned about the matter. In spite of difficulties, it was doing everything possible to avoid using young men on night work."

H.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

"Socialist Standard" Subscription. Readers are reminded that a subscription form is included in this issue. To ensure that the STANDARD is delivered regularly, why not send a subscription for 1957?

Lewisham Branch is holding an extensive propaganda drive during January when a by-election is taking place in Lewisham. An indoor meeting is being held on Thursday, January 10th, at Davenport Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford. Comrades Bryan and Wilmot are the speakers. The meeting starts at 7.30 p.m.—all are welcome. There will be time for questions and discussion.

Lunch Hour Meetings are again being held in Lincoln's Inn Fields on Tuesdays and Fridays and at Finsbury Pavement on Tuesdays. The meetings at Tower Hill on Thursdays are continuing most successfully. At each meeting place the meetings commence at 1 p.m. If members will, whenever possible, support these meetings, there is every chance that we will re-establish these pre-

viously very successful propaganda stations.

Film Lectures at Head Office. These Sunday evening meetings have got off to a very good start—details of the January films are given in this issue. An interesting evening is ensured and there is always time after the lecture for a get together and a cup of tea.

Study Classes are commencing again at Head Office on Sunday afternoon, January 6th, at 3.30 p.m. An excellent syllabus has been prepared and the Classes Organiser is anxious that as many Comrades attend as possible. In the past the classes have proved of great benefit to speakers, writers and members generally, particularly young Comrades.

Head Office Social. A "free and easy" social has been arranged for Saturday, 5th January at 7.30 p.m. at Head Office.

P. H.

IS THERE STATE CAPITALISM IN RUSSIA?

REPLY

We have received the following letter from a reader who thinks we have erred in describing Russia and China as State-Capitalist. Our reply follows.

Greenford, Mddx.
9/12/56.

Dear Friend,

In the December issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD you class the system in Russia and China as State-Capitalism. Now if Capitalism is an exploiting system under which the workers produce profits for the owners of the means of production while they themselves merely get a subsistence allowance, what happens under State-Capitalism? When did Bulganin or Chou-En-Lie last declare a dividend to their fellow shareholders? And if they do not declare dividends, what are their motives? What is it that drives them along? And why do the Capitalists hate them so much—while they have nothing against the Capitalists of—say Germany—who went all out in the last war to pinch their markets and colonies from them?

Yours,
TOM FORDE.

Our correspondent's first point is that if there is State Capitalism it must show itself in the form of "a dividend . . . to shareholders." This is his first misconception. The British Post Office, the Coal Board, British Transport, and the other nationalised industries are State Capitalism and they never declare a dividend to shareholders. The essence of State Capitalism is that the payment of dividends to shareholders is replaced by the payment of interest to bondholders, who, unlike shareholders, are divorced from the control of the undertaking. The former shareholders in the railways, etc., and the investors who hold the government securities that make up the national debt receive the interest on their bonds from the Government, or under Government guarantee. And this is the arrangement that exists in Russia and China. Every State concern in Russia is legally under obligation to make a profit and to pay to the State interest on capital advanced by the Government or the State banks. The Government in turn pays interest to the bondholders or (as is now the dominant arrangement) pays out the equi-

valent of the interest in the form of lottery prizes—the system just borrowed from Russia by the British Government in their Premium Bonds. The Russian national debt held by the Russian bondholders totals something over £9,000 million. It is frequently added to by the raising of new loans.

Quite apart from this, the individual political leaders, industrial managers, popular writers and dramatists and other favoured groups, are able to receive large incomes in salaries, fees, and royalties, which enable them to live on a standard far beyond the condition of the mass of workers and accumulate property—incidentally in cynical disregard of Lenin's dictum that Russia would be run on the lines that all functionaries were to receive wages on the level of the ordinary workers.

Our correspondent's last point is really fantastic. He asks us to accept the view that because the Western Capitalists hate the Russian rulers this proves that Russia is not State Capitalist and is, presumably, Socialism. Yet our correspondent himself shows the absurdity of his own reasoning by his reference to Germany. In 1914-18 and again in 1939-45 the British and German Capitalists were at war and violently "hated" each other. Are we then to deduce from this that the British Capitalists hated the Germans because Germany was Socialist? (Incidentally the British and Russian rulers were on the same side and were declaring their mutual love in the common struggle against the Axis Powers). Capitalist groups come into conflict over markets, trade routes and strategic points and this applies as between the Western Powers and Russia as between all Powers. And has our correspondent forgotten the Pact of Friendship between Russia and Hitlerite Germany? And did he notice that on the Suez issue Russia and America joined together on United Nations to oppose Britain and France. There is no impossibility about a line-up between Russia and any other Capitalist Power in the jungle war of world Capitalism. And what is said above about Russia applies also to China.

Our correspondent is referred to our pamphlet *Russia Since 1917* for further explanation of the State Capitalist nature of Russia.

Ed. GOMM.

ABOUT PRODUCTIVITY

AT Head Office on Sunday, November 25, the film on show was about production and productivity under the title "Room for Discussion." On the screen were the late Arthur Deakin, speaking for trade unionists, an employer, Mr. Graham Hutton, economist, and Mr. Speakman, of the British Productivity Council. The film showed them taking questions from the audience and giving their separate views. In fact there was little disagreement among the panel or those of the audience who put questions, and none at all about any vital question concerning production problems because no vital question was raised. All the discussion took place within the narrow framework of accepting the present social arrangements and seeing what small things could be done within that framework. Nobody raised the question of the desirability of the kind of things that are produced, such as armaments, nobody dealt with the ownership of factories or division of the product, or wondered whether the class relationship of employers and employed might have some bearing, and nobody mentioned the rest of the world outside this country except as a place in which

British exports have to be sold and could be more easily sold if cheaper.

About the biggest suggestion made was that production would go up and costs be lowered if more workers went over to shift working so that the machines could be worked day and night. The panel smoothly agreed that this would be a good thing provided that the workers received some extra pay. It is understandable that the panel took it easily—they don't work shifts—but none of the audience put the workers' point of view about the objections to early, late and night work.

Nobody put the Socialist case that the only way to obtain a really big increase of goods and services useful to the human race (as against the comparatively trifling increases of output per worker that is all the productivity experts can show) is to free millions of workers from their present task of producing armaments, and running Capitalist financial and bureaucratic operations, so that they could be employed on socially useful work. In this way production could be doubled, but the Film Panel and audience seemingly have never even noticed the things that ought to hit them in the eye. They were all conditioned to accepting Capitalism as a necessity for all time.

The audience at our Head Office when the film was shown took part in an interesting and useful discussion of all the things the film ignored.

H.

THE ART RACKET FAIRY-GODMOTHER

NO, fellow-worker, this does not concern you except in one important way. When you read in the Press £27,000 paid for a painting by Corot, £25,000 for one by Murillo, £2,300 for a copy of "Comrade" William Morris's Kelmscott Chaucer, thousands of pounds for old silver, jewels, porcelain, etc., you may wonder what Fairy Godmother has visited the buyers. But would you believe it, you are the Fairy Godmother. It all comes from the profits you are bound to make for the Boss. Works of fine art and the fine dwellings to put them in are part of your contributions to His Imperial Majesty the Boss for the privilege of working your life out for wages. Maybe here and there, of all the thousands of works of art sold, a very small proportion go into public museums and galleries, and 90 per cent. of the time these Galleries are open, you are at work doing the Fairy Godma act and so your cultural uplift gets the go-bye. When next you go to the Public Library, look at the fine art journals such as *The Connoisseur*, etc., and you will see this is not just soap box oratory, for from cover to cover you will see works of art and craftsmanship for sale; charming things to solace the Captains of Industry while they wipe the sweat off their brows. Yes, it goes very well with roast pheasant and champagne! Not many crumbs of the sort fall to you from the Rich Man's table. But be of good cheer for you have just had Christmas, with peace and goodwill to all men.

Now come along and make a New year's resolution, to find out what is behind the art luxury rackets which run parallel with your lives of rush and insecurity. We can help you; read our case and get to work to make a world of Peace and Goodwill. Compliments of the season.

E. K.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS at HEAD OFFICE

Documentary Films followed by brief Socialist comments at H.Q.

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, S.W.4.

(near Clapham North Tube Station)

Every Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting is then open for questions and discussion which can be continued in the Social Room afterwards when light refreshments will be on sale. Visitors particularly welcome.

Jan. 6th "The Road to Peace"—H. Baldwin

" 13th "Big Money"—E. Hardy

" 20th "We are for Peace"—R. Ambridge

" 27th "Letter to a Georgia Mother"—A. W. Ivimey

Feb. 3rd "This is United Nations"—Helen Rose

" 10th "Indonesia Calling"—E. Lake

PUBLIC DEBATE

"WHICH ORGANISATION SHOULD THE WORKING CLASS SUPPORT—

The Socialist Party of Great Britain
or
Union Movement?"

DENISON HOUSE, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road
(Near Victoria Station)

on Monday, Jan. 14th, 1957

at 7.45 p.m.

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ... 11.15 a.m.—2 p.m.
3.30—6 p.m.

East Street
(Walworth) ... Jan. 6th 12.30 p.m.
" 13th 11 a.m.
" 20th 12.30 p.m.
" 27th 11 a.m.

Whitstone Pond
(Hampstead) ... 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park ... 11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Lincoln's Inn Fields ... Tuesdays & Fridays
Finsbury Pavement ... Tuesdays
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
 - 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
 - 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
 - 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
 - 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
 - 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
 - 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
 - 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.
- Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

Copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD are on sale at the newspaper stands as named below. Members and sympathisers are asked to buy from these stands when possible:—

"THE BLACKSTOCK": Finsbury Park. (Sunday morning).

"PRINCES HEAD": Battersea Park Road. (Daily—mornings).

GREAT PORTLAND ST. Tube Station: (Sunday morning).

"RED LION": Kingsbury Rd., Hendon. Sunday morning.

RUSSELL Sq. Tube Station: (Daily).

SHEPHERDS BUSH Tube Station: (Daily—morning).

WIMBLEDON Stn.: (Daily—morning).

WEALDSTONE Station (Sunday morning).

KENTON Station (Sunday morning).

HAMMERSMITH—King Street. (SMITH'S (not W. H.) Newsagents.

HOLLOWAY: Paper shop, D. Johnston, Brecknock Road.

FINSBURY PARK STATION: Main paper stall.

NAG'S HEAD, HOLLOWAY: Main paper stall.

HIGHBURY CORNER: Main paper stall—station.

COLLIERS WOOD: Underground Station (Daily—morning)

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)
BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.
DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Bennie Road, Dundee.
EDINBURGH—Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh
OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 3165.

LEWISHAM BRANCH PUBLIC MEETING
YOUR VOTE

Tory Liberal Labour
or Socialist?

Speakers: L. BRYAN and E. WILMOTT

DAVENPORT CO-OPERATIVE HALL, DAVENPORT ROAD,
RUSHEY GREEN, CATFORD, S.E.6

Thursday, January 10th, 1957

at 7.30 p.m.

Admission FREE.

Questions: Discussion.

ARE YOU A MEMBER?

Socialism is worth all the effort that can be put in to achieve it. Progress towards Socialism depends largely upon the number of Socialists organised together to obtain it. The larger the number the more propaganda can be done and the quicker we will get there.

On the inside of the back page of this issue you will find set out our object and Declaration of Principles. If you agree with them your place is in our ranks.

HACKNEY FILM LECTURE
at

12 MARE STREET, HACKNEY
at 8 p.m.

Monday, January 7th
"Balzac"

Speaker: R. COSTER

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to
Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High
Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months
(6 months, 3/-) for which 6/- is enclosed.

Name
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

(State, if renewal, or new subscriber)

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. Jan. 3rd and 17th.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, J. T. Sheals, 36, Reevy Crescent, Buttershaw, Bradford, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA Meet every Thursday, at 8 p.m., All enquiries to J. Keys, 6, Keppel House, Lucon Place, Chelsea, S.W.3, where branch meets.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (Jan. 9th and 23rd) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, Jan. 14th and 28th at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Mondays at 8 p.m., at 12, Mare Street, Hackney (Cambridge Heath end). Sec.: A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to G. Stead, 38, Lichfield Road, N.W.2. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. (Jan. 2nd, 16th, and 30th) at Vienna Restaurant, 289, Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 11, Oakfield Road, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. M. Judd, 320, Brownhill Road, S.E.6.

MANCHESTER Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, Jan. 1st, 15th and 29th, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec.: J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. Phone: DIDSbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

S.W. LONDON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o. Head Office.

SOUTHEND meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Gisleay, 17, Coitwood Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

SWANSEA Communications to D. Long, 54, Castle Street, Loughor, Swansea, Glamorgan.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae," Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsey, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

DEBATE AT BRISTOL

A Debate will be held on

Friday, 25th January, 7.30 p.m. at

Contact Club, Broadmead Baptist Chapel, Bristol

"SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY"

For S.P.G.B. - J. FLOWERS

For Christianity - Rev. J. PENNY-DAVIES, B.A.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 630 Vol. 53 February, 1957

THE MYTH OF PLANNING

THE "PROSPEROUS" WORKING CLASS

NOTES BY THE WAY

ROWTON HOUSES

MARX, MALTUS AND Mr. STRACHEY

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

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Disunited Nations

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN has always maintained that the United Nations Organisation, and before it, the League of Nations, could never provide a solution to the problem of war.

We have gone further than this. We have claimed that most politicians, British and foreign, have always been well aware of the fact. But politicians, if they are to keep their jobs, must profess to have an answer. After each world war the working class has looked to its "leaders" for a scheme to prevent the next one. No politician in these circumstances could hope to win votes without some solution to offer.

How many politicians have supported U.N.O. in the knowledge that it could not be effective can only be surmised. That it constitutes a majority we assume from the fact that they are generally no less intelligent than the rest of us.

U.N.O. Moonshine

But here is one who, in an unguarded moment, comes right out into the open. Here is what Ted Leather, M.P., thinks of the United Nations:—

"Sir,—Mr. Gaitskell's statement that whatever the United Nations may say we should meekly reply "we obey" is perhaps the key to much of our differences in the last few weeks. Mr. Awbery, Labour member for Central Bristol, recently referred to the United Nations as a "court" which had passed "judgment" on us. In an ideal world they might both be right. In this one it is the view of many of my friends and I that they are talking moonshine.

For good or ill, it is just not true that the United Nations is a supreme court, or that it hands down objective judgments that have any moral force at all. The Assembly in New York, important though it is, is a body of politicians. They make political speeches, and the great majority of them vote according to their own political interests. A large number of them represent dictatorships. Many are openly hostile to Britain. If there were an international Government based on sound principles, or an international supreme court empowered to enforce law, many of us might support it. To surrender the ultimate sanction of the interests of the lives and interests of the British people to a body constituted as the United Nations now is, seems to me not only unrealistic but downright suicidal.

Yours, etc.,

TED LEATHER.

House of Commons."

(Letter to the *Times*, December 10th, 1956.)

We may well wonder how long Mr. Leather has been of this opinion, whether he proclaimed these views when he sought votes at the last election.

He suggests that there are "many of us" who do not support the United

Nations. That is what we thought. But we do not remember "many of them" saying so at the election.

We do not think there are many members of the British electorate who now have any faith in the effectiveness of U.N.O. We believe that most of them are aware, if only vaguely, that international conflict is an inevitable outcome of international Capitalism. The trouble is that they see no alternative.

ONE O'CLOCK, TWO O'CLOCK, THREE O'CLOCK, ROCK...

ROCK, Around the Clock. . . Yes, Rock n' Roll is the craze—from London to Glasgow, Paris to Berlin, and even Moscow.

Dixieland, New Orleans, Chicago, Swing, Boogie Woogie, Jive, Bop . . . they all come, and go. And now it's Rock n' Roll. Teenagers shout, sing and riot wherever the film "Rock Around the Clock" is showing; dance halls hold weekly Rock n' Roll nights; records by Bill Haley, the Platters and Elvis Presley, sell by the million, and even the B.B.C. play a few Rock n' Roll records. Yes, it's the craze. But why?

Every so often "Pop" music gets a shot in the arm; a new lease of life. In the 'twenties it was the Charleston and Jazz Bands, the 'thirties Swing, Boogie Woogie and Jive; the 'forties the New Orleans revival and Bop. And now . . . "Rock"!

What then is Rock n' Roll? It isn't Jazz or Swing or Boogie. It's just a combination of the three . . . a simple beat, a simple lyric, improvisation, plenty of noise—plus "corn"; all the "gimmicks" in the book. Yes it's a gimmick; musical extroversion of the Nth degree. But it's got a beat. Even the "squares" tap their feet, and the "cats" just go wild!

Why do many youngsters go wild over Rock n' Roll? Why did many go crazy over Goodman, Basie or Harry James in the 'thirties, or the Charleston Chasers in the 'twenties? Why do people mob a movie star or a famous footballer? The reason, I think, is that life for most people is pretty boring, "soul destroying"—particularly

It is that alternative which is offered in Socialism. We urge all workers to study the case for Socialism. With that understanding they will never again surrender their votes for spurious solutions to the problems of Capitalism—whether it be war, or poverty or unemployment or any other of its manifestations.

Read our two pamphlets, on Socialism and on War. Think for yourself and put not your trust in "leaders."
J. M.

for youngsters, teenagers, who have more energy than their elders; who have not yet had the zest for life knocked out of them. After eight or nine hours in an office, shop or factory, the "kids" want to do something; they want to express themselves in some way or another. Life for most of them seems empty, purposeless. Modern Capitalist society with its general insecurity, its wars and its call-ups gives them very little to strive for. And after a day at the office or factory bench, they've just got to let themselves go. They need some kind of escape; some kind of outlet for pent-up energy. The movies, the Dance Halls, and Jazz Clubs, provide them with this "escape", this outlet. The cinema, the Dance Halls and Jazz Clubs, each with its variation on an old theme, or a new gimmick or craze such as "Bop" or "Rock," give these youngsters and teenagers a chance once, twice or more times a week to get away from what are often poor, uncomfortable homes; to sing, dance, stamp their feet and "let their hair down," away from the chief clerk, clerk, the factory foreman—and their parents; to leave their worries, their problems, their frustrations and repressions behind—for a while.

Rock n' Roll is a new craze. But a Rock n' Roll night at the Palais; a Rock n' Roll Jamboree can be fun for a few hours a week, yet after all it's not much of a substitute for a really full and interesting life. And our present society denies that to most young people today.

But, for the time being, at least . . . "Rock around the Clock."

PETER E. NEWELL.

Obituary

COMRADE GEORGE RITCHIE

THE Executive Committee and S.W. London Branch members join in sending their deepest sympathy and condolences to Mrs. Ritchie and family on hearing of the sudden death of Comrade George Ritchie, of S.W. London Branch.

Comrade George Ritchie's sudden death on December 21st, was due to Coronary Thrombosis. He was cremated at Streatham Vale on December 27th. Unfortunately news of his passing did not reach us in time, so no member of the Party was present at his funeral, a fact that is deeply regretted by many who would have certainly gone along to pay their last respects. The news of his death

has been a shock to many who knew him.

He joined the Tooting Branch of the Party early in 1929. He never became known as a Speaker or Writer, but turned his energies to promoting the sales of Party Literature in the Tooting area. For many years George worked with Comrade Hutchings, known affectionately to older members as "Hutch," pushing the sales of the SOCIALIST STANDARD in Tooting and Mitcham district, their joint efforts brought forward very good results. After the death of Comrade Hutchings, George Ritchie carried on alone. He was also very active at his place of work. He earned his living as a transport worker, being employed

first with the old General Omnibus Coy., then by London Transport. He became well known to many 'bus and tram workers in the South London area through his efforts at selling Party Literature at various garages and "turn round points," and it would be no mean boast to claim that through his efforts some 'bus workers became interested enough in the Party to eventually become members.

During the 30's and for a while after the war, outdoor propaganda meetings were held at Undine Street, Tooting, the street in which George lived for many years, and many members will recall the short walk along Undine Street to number 68 to collect the portable platform that was always stored there.

George Ritchie was, until recent years, a regular attender at Branch meetings, though latterly his attend-

ances were limited to monthly calls, when he would collect his quota of five dozen SOCIALIST STANDARDS, which he would distribute to the newsagents and readers who he had canvassed and encouraged for years.

It is therefore fitting that the last tribute the Party can pay to Comrade Ritchie, is in the columns of the paper introduced by him into many South London homes. His death is a great loss to the Party, but he will be remembered by his S.W. London comrades for his kindness to members, for being ever ready to offer a word of friendly advice and always at pains to make a new member or a visitor to the branch "at ease." His past efforts and achievements will remain to spur on younger members to continue in the task of propagating Socialism.

W. V. P.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," February, 1907)

The Quintessence of Socialism

There are quite a number of people in this country who call themselves Socialists because they believe in the municipalisation or nationalisation of various things. And these good people appear to be oblivious of the fact that the very essence of Socialism is the control of wealth production and distribution by the wealth producers. It is obvious that if a number of thieves are banded together they are not likely to seek less booty, or seek it less effectively, than when isolated; so, therefore, the Capitalist class, who control the national and local administrative bodies, are not likely to seek less profit, or to seek it less effectively, when their businesses come under their collective control than when they control them individually. The end and aim of a Capitalist is profit, whether it comes as interest on Metropolitan Water Board bonds or as dividend on shares in the A.B.C.; and the ruling class

will not, indeed, undertake municipal or national services at all unless their interests are thereby served and their general profits increased. An industry taken over by the Capitalist State, though it may be also of advantage in other respects, means that more wealth is thereby to be wrung from the workers. The sweating in government factories, the low wages in the Post Office that enable over £4,000,000 to go in relief of Capitalist taxation, are an earnest of what State Capitalism means. Nationalised industries can only become Socialistic, and can only be of real benefit to the workers, when the *working class* has obtained control of the administrative machinery. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the political movement of the workers place itself firmly on the basis of the class struggle. Indeed, all who do not recognise this fact, whatever they may call themselves, are emphatically not Socialists, for mere nationalisation, we repeat, is not Socialism at all.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Lewisham Branch has had to alter the date of their propaganda meeting from 10th January. It is now being held at the same place (Davenport Co-op Hall, Davenport Road, Rushey Green), on **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7th**, at 7.30 p.m. This alteration is due to the later date of the Parliamentary election which is taking place in Lewisham.

Head Office Film Lectures. These are being well attended and audiences are taking part in interesting discussions after the film. A list of films for February are given in this issue.

Glasgow (City) Branch is holding propaganda meetings every Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m. at the Central Halls, Bath Street. The meetings will be of topical interest and will be held weekly (with the exception of 21st April) until the end of April.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) Branch is holding a propa-

ganda meeting at St. Andrews Halls (Berkley St. entrance) on Sunday, 17th February. Further details in this issue.

Bristol Group are planning a debate with the local branch of the Communist Party. Members are also very active in getting letters in the local Press, thus bringing the Party to the notice of readers.

Ealing Branch. The second series of Branch discussions will start on February 1st and continue fortnightly thereafter. All members are being individually notified and are asked to give their support. In addition there will be a visit to the Geological Museum one Sunday in February, full details of which will be sent to the members later. In line with the E.C.'s request, all the local branches of the Communist Party have been circulated with the Party's open letter. At the same time, the first letters are being sent out asking local Trade Union branches to receive one of our speakers.

Comrade G. R. Jacobs, who died in October last, has been associated with the Party for many years. His work caused him to travel considerably but when he returned to London he was active at meetings, particularly at Lincoln's Inn Fields. Solicitors acting for his Niece have forwarded the sum of £200 which Comrade Jacobs willed to the Party "for its General Purposes Fund."

News from America. Comrades Evans and Henderson, of Los Angeles Local, upon receiving a supply of S.P.G.B. Suez Crisis leaflets, held a good propaganda meeting in Pershing Square and distributed the leaflets to the audience. Leaflets have also been posted to sympathisers.

P. H.

ROWTON HOUSES

*Here the soul finds poppy-juice to ease and glad her,
And the radiant lotus-flower of royal slumber.
Surely this cemented stair's a golden ladder
Angel-cohorts, bearing lilies, climb and cumber. . . .*
(Rowton House Rhymes.)

DIRTY washing never flapped more disconsolately on a line than these men. They hang over the barrier at the Broadway's edge watching the traffic pass, stamping their feet among muddy newspapers. The neon lights flick on and off, touching their flesh first red and then green. They stare at the bright shop windows and at the painted faces borne perilously past on stiletto heels. Spasmodically, they drift off home to bed. For them, and for a few thousand like them, that means to the local Rowton House.

To most people, the term "Rowton House" evokes an image of a verminous flop-house where dead-beats and desperadoes rub shoulders, paying a copper or two for a couple of feet of rope under the armpits (has anyone ever slept like that?) The Houses are the butt of many a music-hall joker and the subject of much prejudice; few employers would take on a cashier who gave the local Rowton House as his address and it has been known for a mother hearing that her son was living at a House, to storm hot-foot from the provinces to take her boy away from such supposedly evil surroundings. Yet it is a fact that if such impressions ever find their way into print, a sharp solicitor's letter is enough to extract a public withdrawal; once the B.B.C. had to climb down and apologise after a comedian's crack about Rowton Houses in the programme "Palace of Varieties."

So it seems that Rowton Houses are not as bad as most people think them to be. What is the truth of the matter? What are they like, what type of person uses them and what goes on inside them? And how did they come about?

Light-hearted Aristocrat

The founding of Rowton Houses was the work of Montagu William Lowry-Corry, who was a light-hearted 19th Century aristocrat, a favourite of Disraeli, who caught the famous man's attention by livening up a stodgy party at Raby Castle. Corry became Disraeli's private secretary and served unflinchingly through all the years of his chief's prominence as Chancellor of the Exchequer and later as Prime Minister. When in 1875 Disraeli persuaded the Cabinet to try for a loan from Rothschild to buy a substantial interest in the Suez Canal Company, it was Corry who ran the errand from Downing Street to get the banker's approval. Later, when Disraeli had relinquished power and was a pitiful figure, it was usually Corry's arm he was seen to be leaning on in public. Corry got his reward in 1880 when he became the first and last Baron Rowton. When Disraeli died (with Rowton, of

course, at his bedside), he left all his papers and letters to his secretary's discretion.

Rowton conceived the idea of his Houses in the early 1890's after the investigations into common lodging houses which he undertook as a trustee of the Guinness Fund. At that time the lodging houses of London were little better than the sort of place which Dickens described in *Bleak House*. The Lodging House Bill of 1851 had been drafted to stamp out the kip-houses where, it was said, the bugs could be scraped up by the handful and the only sanitary arrangements were communal buckets placed one to a room; a room which could hold anything up to 60 people. But there were many convenient loopholes in the Bill and it is certain that 40 years on there were still some unsavoury establishments for Rowton's investigations. The aristocrat also made it his business to approach the Embankment sleepers—one story tells of him leaving the House of Lords of an evening and spending the best part of the night talking with the Thames-side down and outs. It was then that Rowton decided on his scheme to build cheap working men's hotels, where at prices they could afford, the homeless of London would find a clean bed, food and somewhere to sit of an evening. At the same time, the venture had to yield a return on the money invested in it; Rowton's slogan was said to be "Philanthropy—at five per cent."

First Night

Brushing aside the warnings of his friends, Rowton put £30,000 of his own money into the building of the first House at Vauxhall. This was opened on the very last day of 1892, when only 77 men paid their sixpence for a night's lodging. Over 400 beds were left empty and the first day's takings in the catering department came to about 15s. 10½d. The building had been designed so that in the event of failure it could easily be converted and sold as a warehouse and it seemed that this would have to be, but business became brisker; in the first month over 200 beds were taken nightly and soon the 400 mark was passed. In 1894, a company, Rowton Houses Ltd., was formed with a capital of £75,000, of which £30,000 was given to Rowton in return for the money he had invested in the Vauxhall experiment. At the company's first annual meeting it was reported that the House had been full to capacity on nearly every night and a comfortable dividend of four per cent. was declared. Other Rowton Houses were subsequently built at King's Cross, Elephant and Castle, Hammersmith, Whitechapel, and Camden Town, each in densely populated areas, within

easy reach of the principal transport termini and centres of employment in the markets, docks and railway goods depots.

The Houses have always been an interesting barometer of the prevailing economic weather; for instance during the slump of the thirties, there was a decrease in the number of beds booked by the week and a striking increase in reservations on the days when the dole was paid at the local employment bureau. At that time at least five doctors and nine journalists were resident at Rowton Houses, touching elbows with men whose living depended on a charity ticket. When the 1931 dole was reduced to 15/3d., the Houses cut their prices so that a man could live there (just about) on the money. Their budget allowed for nothing apart from food and lodging; not surprisingly, many men took to a bench on the Embankment rather than face a tobaccoless existence. During the two World Wars the Houses were variously used as barracks, refugee centres and unofficial air-raid shelters.

Rowton Houses To-day

Rowton Houses Ltd. is to-day a solidly flourishing £505,000 capital company, with assets of some £650,000 and a dividend steadily at about 8 per cent. It is not a charitable institution or a trust and has no connection with any religious organisation; business, pure and simple, is its line. "Although we are undoubtedly doing a good work," said a one-time director of the company, "there is nothing of patronage or philanthropy about it." The Houses never spend money on public advertisements, yet something like 98 per cent. of the 5,000-odd available beds are filled each night; how many hoteliers would like to be able to make a similar claim? The company has its own laundry and maintenance staff and supplies a barbering and cobbling service in the Houses. Charges have recently been increased from 2/6d. to 3/- a night (in 1910 it was 9d.). It is here that the profit is made—although the catering department pulled in nearly £130,000 during 1955, there is little profit in this side of the business. Post-war full employment has made its mark, in the Houses which now offer special private rooms, instead of cubicles, at 35/- a week. A dinner of soup, steak pudding with potatoes, followed by plum tart and custard, costs 2/8d. (in 1910 again, it would have set you back by 7d.)—and the House dining rooms are open to non-residents.

What are the Houses like? From the outside they are imposing, barrack-like buildings with their smooth red-brick and small windows. Their impressive size—for example at Hammersmith—is often blanketed by the buildings which have sprung up around them. Inside, overwhelming impressions are of the white and chocolate glazed bricks which are everywhere in all the Houses, the smell of cheap tobacco, the men who are openly down on their luck and looking for something cheap and quick, men who are existing on their wits (on one afternoon visit, nearly every other lodger seemed to be studying a greyhound race card). Men stand aimlessly in the entrance hall, despite stern notices asking them not to. The floors are stone or wood and there are no soft seats—all the furniture is in wood, mostly with iron standards. The dining rooms and kitchens are unfailingly clean, with much up-to-date equipment. There is a billiards room (always well full of an evening), writing room and lecture room—now, of course, with television installed—in each House. For some reason, draughts is a passion of Rowton House residents; regular demonstrations take place, which

give men the chance to show off their considerable skill at the game; the 1948 English champion was a Rowton House regular. All the Houses have their permanent lodgers—some of them have been booking the same cubicle, week after week, for over a quarter of a century.

Queer Types

Because Rowton Houses offer such cheap accommodation, we can expect them to attract some poor types. Sure enough, there are descriptions of wanted men in the reception desks, alongside the file of past residents who are now banned because they fought or stole or carried lice or made a mess in their rooms. No one is allowed to book in unless he produces some evidence of identification, which is checked against these files. Occasionally, gangs form and make a nuisance of themselves until the management can weed them out. The reception staff show all the signs of being case-hardened towards people who, after all, are their clients. And among the residents are the simply queer cases: the man who wore two jackets (and this on a stuffy evening).

Apart from these, the Houses are used a lot by young men who have left home to follow a job—the list of letters awaiting collection reveals the number of Irishmen and foreigners in residence. For these the Houses are not a bad proposition; they are usually earning a wage on which they can afford to get out in the evening, when the glazed bricks and old men's pipes are by no means at their most attractive. It is a different matter for the old ones, who make up a good part of Rowton Houses' customers. These are the men who have no family to care about them, whose life has been reduced to the tightrope act of living on a retirement pension. For them, apart from the cheapness, the Houses offer the attraction of living in the company of fellow human beings instead of eking out their last days in a lonely room. Here is one of the tragedies of post-war conditions; the lot of old people is to-day as precarious as it has ever been—indeed, some say that it is worse since the Welfare State boys took over the running of British Capitalism. Evidence of the tragedy can be seen in the Rowton Houses, in the old men sitting out the long evenings on the hard wooden seats, staring with patient eyes at the walls, waiting for the next meal, for bedtime, waiting in the end to die.

None is Secure

The Houses are fond of describing themselves as working men's hotels—one of their officials actually went so far as to use the term "residential Club." (A brochure says "Up to London? Stay at Rowton House"). Of course, all this is to rather stretch the meaning of words; no Rowton House lodger is ever called "sir" by the staff and nobody gets a hand with his luggage when he arrives. We can say that the Houses are not dirty or verminous, nor are they the stamping grounds of footpads and cut-purses. The most respectable among us could spend a night in them without fear. Because of this, a first inspection can give a strongly favourable impression; but that is only because one goes there expecting something much worse. In cold fact, they are places where men put up when they are too poor to have an independent home. The problem of not being able to afford the good—and some of the not so good—things in life is the bugbear of the great majority of us in the Capitalist world, where everything has its price and the amount we can buy is restricted by the narrowness of our wage packet. Some of us may live in a semi-detached in Accacia Avenue:

but if some day we should be unable to work because there is a slump or because we have suffered an accident or have grown old then we could easily become clients of Rowton Houses. It is poverty which has been filling the places for over 50 years and will go on filling them

as long as Capitalism lasts. Nobody is secure. The next time we see someone shuffling through the doorway of a Rowton House we may all reflect that there, but for the grace of something-or-other, go we.

IVAN.

ODDS AND ENDS

Totalitarian Hungary

Under the heading "Hungary to Have Only One Party," the *Sunday Observer* reports from Vienna a statement of a Mr. Marosan, Minister of State in the Kadar Government, that:—

"The Government will try to broaden itself by including non-Communist Party representatives of other former parties."

"This does not mean that other parties will be admitted in Hungary." (6:1:57.)

There is to be only one legal party—the so-called Hungarian Communist Party. And this the Communists call a "People's Democracy!" After one of the bloodiest national revolts in recent years, and the greatest anti-Communist rebellion in a Soviet controlled country, the Communists still carry on as though nothing had ever happened.

* * *

Shake, Rattle and Rock

Following the tremendous success (both from the entertainment and financial point of view) of the film "Rock Around the Clock," another Rock 'n Roll film has been widely shown on the circuits. It is called "Shake, Rattle and Rock." It is fairly light-hearted and includes numerous Rock 'n Roll hits. But it also gives some background to the craze, its influence on teenagers and the attitude of the T.V. and Radio tycoons.

The "hero" of "Shake, Rattle and Rock" is a young disc jockey and youth club organiser in a slum area. His boss at the T.V. studio looks upon Rock 'n Roll solely as a money-making gimmick, something to push and push . . . and then drop when the public is no longer interested; when it is no longer a money-maker. To the young disc jockey Rock 'n Roll is an art-form; a form of teenage expression like the "Charleston" and the "Blackbottom" of a couple of decades or so ago. But more important Rock 'n Roll is a means of keeping the kids off the streets; of preventing them from becoming hoodlums in the pay of local gangsters.

The film comes to an end with a mock trial, at which a local "anti-Rock" vigilante committee claims that Rock 'n Roll is decadent, savage and causes crime. But Rock 'n Roll emerges triumphant. . . . It is a harmless outlet for youthful energy—and, more important, a good money-maker.

* * *

Eating Out?

How pleasant it is to eat out. No need to cook an evening meal.

On Monday evening one can visit the *Latin Quarter*—Dinner, Cabaret and Dance—featuring Mimi Pearse and 20 beautiful girls, all for 21/- plus "booze." And on Tuesday evening there is always the *Pigalle* with Dinner-de-Luxe at 27/6 (Saturdays à la carte, only 35/-!) And Wednesday evening finds one at the *Green Street Club*—"The Club in Mayfair for the Connoisseur." . .

And so on through the week.

Life can be so interesting and easy . . . so long as you are "well loaded" with money. Of course, if you are just a clerk, "bus driver, a school teacher, or a shop keeper; if, in fact, you are a worker like the majority of people, then you will have to go to *Lyons Corner House*, the *A.B.C.*, or the *Caff* round the corner—or go home and cook the spaghetti yourself!!

* * *

Fact or Fiction

A book that this writer read just over ten years ago makes quite interesting re-reading. It is *The Great Conspiracy Against Russia* by Sayers and Kahn, two pro-Russian American writers.

On re-reading this book one can understand how so many young Communists were taken-in by it ten years ago. Much of Book I (section I that is) dealing with Western interference in Russian affairs, the activities of White Russian émigré organisation, etc., after the Revolution in Russia in 1917, is no doubt correct. But much of the "Treason Trials" propaganda, the anti-Trotskyist tirades and the like in this book have now been exploded for ever. One example will suffice:—

"At the time of the Axis-supported Franco uprising in Spain, 1936-1938, Andreas Nin headed an ultra-leftist, pro-Trotsky Spanish organization called the *Partido Obrero de Unificación Marxista*, or P.O.U.M. . . . when the P.O.U.M. staged an abortive revolt in Barcelona behind the loyalist lines in the crucial summer of 1937 and called for 'resolute action to overthrow the Government,' it was discovered that Nin and the other P.O.U.M. leaders were actually fascist agents working with France and that they had been carrying on a systematic campaign of sabotage, espionage and terrorism against the Spanish Government. . . . Secret documents seized by the Barcelona Police established that P.O.U.M. members had been carrying on extensive espionage for the fascists; . . ." (p. 296.)

That the P.O.U.M. wanted a different government no one will deny but to say, as do Sayers and Kahn, that the P.O.U.M.ists were a pro-Fascist organisation is typical of the pro-Stalinist fiction in this book. George Orwell in his book *Homage To Catalonia*, and Hugo Dewar in *Assassins at Large*, have both shown conclusively that the Communist allegations against not only the P.O.U.M., but also the Anarchists, in Spain, are pure fabrications, having no basis in fact.

The Great Conspiracy is interesting reading . . . as fiction!

PEN.

NEW PAMPHLET

A pamphlet *Socialist Comment*, is now on sale (40 pages, 6d., post free 8d.) It contains seven articles reprinted from issues of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* during the past year or two. It deals with the colour problem in South Africa; why Socialists oppose the Labour Party; Housing; boom and slump; the ownership of property; and 'the workers' ideas about their pay.

CORRESPONDENCE

OUR ATTITUDE ON HUNGARY

Salford, 7,
December 18, 1956.

Dear Comrades,

I think the Party's attitude on this subject needs further elucidation. In this month's S.S. it is considered that the revolt is not worth the shedding of a drop of working-class blood.

This seems to conflict with previous statements that the Hungarian workers were trying to improve their miserable condition. In my view it also differs from the position on the first Russian revolution recently quoted in "50 years ago." There it was stated that the workers and Capitalists have a short way to travel together. But not in Hungary!

In any case it needs to be made clear what the workers are supposed to do under a Communist dictatorship. It won't be smashed without the shedding of working class blood; and there won't be any Socialism or even propaganda for Socialism till it is smashed.

It has often been said that the Capitalists will never let themselves be ousted but if defeated on the Parliamentary field would form a dictatorship. I should have thought the original success of the Hungarians against their own national dictatorship (before overwhelming Russian intervention) was a good case for the Party in that respect. I think it also might have been mentioned that the working class, even those who had been schooled only on "Communism," showed that objective conditions still prevailed over 'phony propaganda.

In general I did feel the S.S. was less than generous to the heroic effort which wrested power, "with bare hands" from a police state.

Yours truly,
L. E. WEEDBERG.

Having said the above, may I add that the general excellence of the articles in the S.S. over the years is not unappreciated by one who has left the work to others.

REPLY

The article in the December S.S. to which the critic refers made it clear that, whilst expressing sympathy with the victims of the "Communist" savagery, the Hungarian revolt was fundamentally a movement in favour of Hungarian Capitalist rule, and therefore was not worth the shedding of a drop of working class blood. One reason for this is that the removal of Russian Capitalist oppression is no guarantee that Hungarian Capitalist rule would be any better in the long run.

We have learnt from experience during the last 50 years. We were urged to support the Russian armed rising against the Czarist Police State 40 years ago. The result of that rising has been the establishment of one of the most savage and oppressive police states in the history of the world. We were urged to support the German rising about the same time and the result was another form of police state equally savage. Austria and China have had similar experiences.

However much we may desire to see freedom of expression where it is denied, armed uprising is not

the way to accomplish it. Once guns enter into the dispute then guns continue to be the arbiters in internal clashes of ideas afterwards, until either economic development or organised working class action compels the powers that rule to make concessions. That has been the lesson repeatedly driven home, but not wholly appreciated, during the last 100 years of working class activity. However much we may desire to make progress there is no quicker way than this organised working class action to clear the road to working class emancipation.

Thus, although we appreciate the courage of those who were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice rather than continue to suffer Russian domination, it is our duty as Socialists to tell the bitter truth. Firstly, that it was not a rising aimed at bringing the workers freedom; secondly, that armed uprisings may bring a change of rulers but will not bring freedom from class rule; thirdly, that the success of the uprising would not necessarily have put an end to the police state.

It is not true that there cannot be any Socialist propaganda until a "Communist" dictatorship is smashed. The critic himself suggests that there can be Socialist propaganda when he writes that "the working class, even those who had been schooled on 'Communism' showed that objective conditions still prevailed over phony propaganda." The revolt was not a bolt out of the blue. It had been discussed and organised. There is, and has been, Socialist propaganda in all "Communist" and other police states.

It is worth while bearing in mind that, according to the information so far available the peaceful agitation of the Hungarian workers by stopping work has accomplished more, at far less cost in human life, than the armed uprising did. Thus, it certainly appears that the sounder attitude for the Hungarian workers would have been to stick to that method from the beginning in order to accomplish the limited objectives they were after. Sooner than see the whole social fabric collapse into confusion the rulers would have conceded some at least of their demands. However, once an armed revolt was embarked upon bloody conflict was inevitable, with savage reprisals and the use of Russian armed might; and now the atmosphere is still there for further savage reprisals.

Another advantage strike action alone would have achieved would be this. Attacks on peaceful strikers by the police, the militia, and the army, would have made the savagery of the Russian overlords more obvious to the world of Labour. The Russian rulers would not then be able to put forward the pretence that they were quelling an armed rising against the government.

We are surprised at the last paragraph of the critic's letter. Over and over again we have expressed our admiration for the courage and devotion of those who took part in the rising; we have, however, been truthful in regretting that it was not done in a better cause, the freedom from all oppression. To be generous without being truthful is to invite cheap praise. We have done our best to be helpful to the working class cause by pointing out realities in order to minimise, as far as possible, use-

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THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

FEBRUARY



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE MYTH OF PLANNING

WHEN the world has taken the great forward step of establishing Socialism production will, of course, be planned so that there will at all times be enough basic materials, finished products, and transport and other services, etc., to meet the requirements of the population. The chief aim will be to have enough to satisfy all needs after making allowance for growing population and for all possible wastage and destruction through storm, fire, and other eventualities. But it will not matter greatly if too much is produced because nobody will be dependent on paid employment for his living and therefore nobody will lose anything by finding that the articles he works to produce have been produced in too great abundance. Men and women will be rather complacent about producing too much and only worried if they should err by producing too little.

Too Much or Too Little

Notice how this differs from the kind of planning that goes on in the world of manufacture today. Now the business man would be quite unruffled if he had planned the output of his factory so that it turned out to be rather less than demand, but he would be very worried indeed if his output was too large for the market for that would mean falling prices and smaller profits.

Planning versus Forecasting

We are, however, dealing with two different operations, for the kind of planning of production that will be possible under Socialism is quite unlike the market forecasting that goes on now. The one is concerned with determining how much you need and then getting things organised so that you will have that amount produced in good time. But present day forecasting of demand starts at the other end and is really much nearer to guesswork.

It requires that the manufacturer shall form an opinion about what kind of product will be a saleable one, two, five or ten years ahead and how much of it will in fact be sold and at what price. Of course the length of time varies according to the nature of the product. Christmas Cards are designed and planned something more than a year ahead and women's dresses and hats something less than a year. Planning and sinking coal mines may take several years, as also does the planning and construction of an oil refinery. In all these instances market conditions at the end of the period may be quite different from those the planner thought they would be. He may find his anticipated sales of summer dresses and hats ruined by an English "summer," or that the market for coal or oil has suddenly grown or suddenly shrunk.

Forecasting for 1960-1970

Information was given in a *Financial Times* supplement on the Motor Industry, about the problems of forecasting future sales of motor cars (15 October, 1956, p. 7). The head of the Sales Analysis Department of the Ford Motor Company, Mr. K. D. Bull, explained that companies in the motor industry undertake two types of forecasting:—

"The first covers the short-term period up to and including the next 12 months and is used for production planning. The second covers a longer period and is used for much wider purposes. This latter type of study is undertaken not as an interesting academic exercise, but as a necessary concomitant of future planning. The time taken for the installation of new facilities, and in the processing of new models from conception to production, means that the investment involved can only be justified in terms of the sales to be expected over the period of their employment, which may be some years ahead."

Mr. Bull went on to explain that this second type of forecasting deals with the period which "does not start for two or three years hence and covers generally the ensuing ten years. In using this forecast we pay little attention to the results for individual years, accepting only that these give a reasonably accurate measure of the market in the average."

This period of three to ten years means that in 1957 they would be trying to figure out what average conditions will be between 1960 to 1970 and it is not at all surprising therefore that they do not attempt to forecast what is likely to be the state of the market in individual years within the 10 year period.

Mr. Bull says too that past efforts to forecast the long term demand for motor cars have all underestimated the size of the demand that actually came.

Where Labour Party Planners Go Wrong

The Labour Party (and the Communists), are believers in what they call planning, but the trouble with it is that it is out of its time. They are trying to apply planning of production to Capitalism, but what Capitalism requires is not the planning of production but the forecasting of demand in the market—a very different thing. So far as this near-guesswork about sales is possible at all, the manufacturers can do it as well (or as ill) as anyone else; certainly better than a Labour Party Committee, or a Labour Cabinet. The real planning of production is not required under Capitalism and will only be possible under Socialism.

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less heroism in the future. We are also mindful of the bitter fact that the victims of today are so often the oppressors of tomorrow.

The revolt did not, as our critic puts it "wrest power, 'with bare hands,' from a police state." The repressive action from outside was a foregone conclusion, and the power remains where it was. Furthermore, the action was not taken "with bare hands." A portion of the Hungarian army took part in it and arms were in the hands of the revolvers.

Finally, let us consider the reference to the extract from the SOCIALIST STANDARD of "Fifty Years Ago" that appeared in the November number. It concerns the attitude of the Socialist movement in a country where there is a revolt against a particular form of repression. We would urge the critic to look at the whole extract again in order to get a clear picture of what the writer was driving at. We would particularly urge him to take note of the following selections from the extract:—

"Hence, in the other nations of Western Europe a straight fight is possible between the proletariat and the capitalist ruling class, whilst in Russia the rising capitalist class has yet its emancipation from autocracy to accomplish:

so that, in contrast with practically the whole of civilised nations, the working class and the capitalist class in Russia have, in the abolition of Tzardom's tyranny, a step to go together. This historical circumstance, which is at once the strength and weakness of the Russian movement, distinguishes it from that of all capitalist countries."

"Let us then do all in our power to help our Socialist comrades in Russia in the hope that they will not be deceived as to the outcome of the present upheaval: in the hope, also, that they will sternly keep their separate identity, and distinct aim, so that the Russian bourgeoisie State of tomorrow may find a militant class-organisation of Socialist workers leading the final struggle against the Capitalist class, whose defeat must herald the Triumph of Humanity."

It will be seen from the above that the struggle in Russia 50 years ago was to get rid of the semi-feudal barriers, and the Socialist movement there was urged to keep their independence and their Socialist policy. As far as Capitalist Hungary is concerned that is still the attitude for the Socialist to take. Socialists there, just as under autocratic Russia in days gone by, should stand by their Socialist objective and do what propaganda they can under existing conditions, just as, for instance, an Austrian comrade of ours did under the Nazi and Russian occupations.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

MARX, MALTHUS AND MR. STRACHEY

MR. STRACHEY in his book *Contemporary Capitalism* (pp. 88, 89), says, "Marx in spite of his dislike for Malthus and all his theories agreed that a rapidly rising population would help to depress the standard of life of the wage worker." Natural fertility would always be increasing the number of workers competing for jobs and this would be further augmented by the displacement of workers by continuous mechanisation. Mr. Strachey asserts that not only did Marx say this but he also went on to deduce from it that a labour shortage could never arise. Moreover because of the ever-increasing dead-weight of unwanted workers on the labour market, wages would not only be forced down to a bare subsistence level but even increasingly below it. Thus as the result of capital accumulation the mass of the population would come to exist on a semi-starvation diet insufficient for the replacement of their working energies.

Mr. Strachey offers nothing to support these astonishing statements. He merely tells us airily that it can all be found in "the central chapters of Vol. I. of *Capital*." But where we are to look for actual quotations or specific references for Mr. Strachey's claims, God alone knows and Mr. Strachey presumably shares the secret with him.

Our advice to Mr. Strachey is first catch your facts before you cook them. Perhaps a quotation from one of the central chapters in Vol. I. of *Capital* will show that Mr. Strachey can economise truth as well as evidence. In Vol. I. of *Capital* (p. 626, Swan Sonnenschein edition), Marx states:—

"The requirements of accumulating capital may exceed the increase of labour-power or of the number of labourers; the demand for labourers may exceed the supply. This must ultimately be the case if the conditions supposed above continue. For since in each year more labourers are employed than in its predecessor, sooner or later a point must be reached at which the requirements of accumulation begin to surpass the customary supply of labour and therefore a rise of wages takes place."

The challenge to Mr. Strachey is to show us where in Marx's economic analysis of Capitalism his conclusions pointed to the depressing of wages to the barest physical level, as the outcome of capital accumulation. So far from that being true, Marx in a detailed analysis in one of the central chapters in Vol. I. of *Capital*, viz., "*Capital Accumulation*," shows the tendency for wages to rise under the impact of accumulation. Nevertheless Marx also pointed out that the defensive mechanism of Capitalism is such as to prevent rising wages from absorbing the whole of profits.

In the first place capital accumulation tends to slacken off appreciably should there occur a sharp threat to profit margins—and rising wage levels can constitute such a threat.

Secondly a typical reaction to advancing wages is the substitution of mechanical power for labour power. The net effect of each concern in its efforts to reduce "labour costs," will, by freeing workers, bring into being an industrial reserve army or as Marx alternatively calls it "relative over-population" which by its active competition on the labour market, exerts a downward pressure on wage levels.

The Factors Affecting Wages

The impulse for wages to rise under the stimulus of expanding capital accumulation, produces in turn a counter tendency for them to fall. It is this profit motivated expansion and contraction of capital accumulation with its expansion and contraction of the industrial reserve army which constitutes the regulating principle in determining the upper and lower limits of wage levels.

Marx's solution to the way Capitalism deals with the threat of rising wage levels can be stated in his own words, *Capital*, Vol. I. (p. 653, Swan Sonnenschein Ed.).

"The industrial reserve army during the period of stagnation and average prosperity weigh down the active labour army; during the periods of over-production it holds its

pretensions in check. Relative surplus population is therefore the pivot upon which the law of demand and supply of labour works. It confines the field of action of this law within the limits absolutely convenient to the activity of exploitation and to the domination of capital."

Marx's concept of relative over-population does not rest then on the assumptions of any particular population theory. It is valid whether we are dealing with a rising population, a stationary population, or even a relatively declining one.

If, for instance, we examine a particular country where capital accumulation has historically got under way, we find that an increased working population is one of its necessary adjuncts. In the genesis of capital accumulation the labour force necessary for its expansion is historically recruited by means of land expropriation, the ruin of domestic industry and the elimination of the independent craftsman. Even so this may be inadequate for its needs and in that case an intensive and extensive recruitment for additional labour supplies may be resorted to both inside and outside the national area.

On the other hand in a country where economic development is retarded and capital accumulation lags as a result, although the population may be stationary or even relatively declining, there may be considerable unemployment i.e. relative over-population.

It can be seen then that the Malthusian theory of over-population affords no clue to the emergence of an industrial reserve army in Capitalism.

It might also be mentioned as a point of interest that the growth of capital accumulation in the latter half of the 19th century gave rise to labour shortages in various sections of industry. Moreover large bodies of workers were now organised in strong trade unions and were prepared to make the most of the conditions. Thus in place of flexibility certain rigidities were appearing on the labour market.

The Capitalist answer to this less easy situation in the labour market was more extensive mechanisation and the effect of this is redundancy of workers and the net result an increase in labour supply with its tendency to depress wages.

Through such economic agencies did Capitalism maintain, perpetuate and at times multiply relative over-population and this was going on when a relative decline in fertility rates was taking place, for it was round about the 1870's that there began marked decline in population trends in the most advanced western countries. Thus the emergence and maintenance of an industrial reserve army, is a phenomenon of Capitalist society irrespective of changes in population trends and contrary to the foolish assertions of Mr. Strachey.

The Changing Composition of Capital

Now what Marx did point out was something quite different from Mr. Strachey's interpretation of what he said. What Marx actually did say was that the concentration and growth of capital accumulation had certain consequences which affected the lot of the working class and expressed itself in what he termed the changing character of the composition of capital.

If, said Marx, we examine the total outlay of capital, we shall find that the part spent on the means of production i.e. plant, tools, buildings, etc., and called by him "constant capital," tends to increase relatively to the part spent on wage payments or what he termed "variable capital." Now seeing that the demand for labour-power

is determined not by the total capital outlay of investment but by the variable part of it alone, then although the demand for labour-power increases absolutely, as total capital expenditure increases, the demand falls relatively to the magnitude of the total capital outlay.

Stated as a general theoretical proposition it is this process of capital accumulation as stated above which, as the history of Capitalism shows, has produced relative over-population, or as Marx states, "a population of greater extent than suffices for the average needs of the self-expansion of capital."

Marx rejected Malthus in toto. "An abstract of law of population," he said, "exists for plants and animals only, and only in so far as man has not interfered with them." (*Capital* Vol. I., p. 645). He also referred to Malthus's theory as the dogma of the economist and a libel on the human race. Marx categorically denied that population factors were in any way responsible for mass unemployment and poverty.

Rejecting eternal laws of population supposedly applicable to all societies, Marx formulated the proposition that every stage of historical development had its own laws of population. It was not merely that Marx asserted it but he set out to demonstrate it by a detailed investigation of the law of motion of Capitalist society. He was thus able to formulate a law of population peculiar to Capitalism, a law which fitted the facts of the contemporary situation in a way which the eternal laws of Malthus could not do.

The "Iron Law of Wages"

When, therefore, Mr. Strachey asserts that Marx accepted Lassalle's iron law of wages (*Contemporary Capitalism*, p. 105), but for politically tactical reasons appeared to oppose it, one realises just how disingenuous Mr. Strachey can be.

In case anybody might be deceived by the pseudo-learned sophistry of Mr. Strachey, let us state that Lassalle took his concept of the iron law of wages from Malthus and Ricardo, not from Marx. In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx repudiated in all its forms, the iron law of wages. He said, "If excess of population is the cause of poverty then Socialism can not abolish poverty which has its basis in nature." For Marx poverty and mass unemployment in Capitalism cannot be explained wholly or in part as due to an increase in natural fertility rates.

Engels in a letter to Bebel (March, 1875) said categorically that Lassalle's iron law of wages was "a false statement with a false basis." He also said "Marx proved in detail in *Capital* that the laws regulating wages are very complicated, . . . they are in no sense iron but on the contrary very elastic." Evidently Engels was unable to find in "these central chapters of *Capital*," what Mr. Strachey found there.

Nothing exhibits Mr. Strachey's obfuscation of Marx more than his assertion that if Marx had only diagnosed a tendency towards ever-increasing poverty and final economic collapse instead of making it the automatic outcome of the workings of Capitalism, he would have been justified instead of being falsified. This, itself, is a falsification of Marx's views which is either due to sheer ineptitude or the bad intent of the apologetic.

The Automatic Breakdown of Capitalism

Marx's economic analysis never indicates some automatic breakdown of Capitalism. Nor even a tendency

towards that end. Thus Mr. Strachey accuses Marx of something he never said, then reproaches him for not saying what Mr. Strachey thinks he ought to have said. Again not only has Mr. Strachey confused notions in seeing in the system a tendency towards greater poverty and collapse, but he reproaches Marx for not sharing his confusion.

Mr. Strachey then blandly assures us that although such a tendency inheres in Capitalism the Labour Movement has overruled this tendency. Mr. Strachey makes central to the Labour Movement the franchise, social reforms and trade unions, whereas in actual fact they are the outcome of the development of Capitalism itself. Such things are not the counter-balance of the Labour Party

against some non-existent tendency but an aspect of the normal regularisation necessary to an exploitative system.

Theoretically Mr. Strachey sees the possibilities of this inherent tendency to breakdown producing on a greater scale, slumps, lowered standards of living, etc., but believes that the Labour Party will so manage and regulate Capitalism as to confer on it all the advantages of Socialism. Lord Keynes has made all this possible. Mr. Strachey is, of course, a great admirer of Keynes, whose sole claim to economic originality was to plagiarise Malthus's doctrine of effective demand.

But this is another story and here we must take leave of Mr. Strachey and Malthus—both in their different ways, shallow and false prophets.

E. W.

NOTES BY THE WAY

The Fabians and the House of Lords

In the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* for February, 1907, was an article about the *Fabians* which opened with a quotation:—

"The government of the future will be by experts and we, naturally, want to be the experts."

This little gem had been spoken by Mr. H. Snell, of the Fabian Society.

The writer in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* had appropriate comments to make on this typically Fabian proposal for running other people's lives. He began:—

"So now you know, if you did not before, what the Fabian Society are after. Their 'Socialism' is government by bureau, and 'naturally' (sweet word) they want to be the bureaucrats. 'Naturally' they want the plums. 'Naturally' they want to sit in the seats of authority and arrange things for the benefit (*naturally* for the benefit) of the other and somewhat lower orders who do the mere producing."

Our writer hit the nail on the head when he said the Fabians aimed to occupy the seats of authority and in the course of time many of them had their little hour in the Labour Governments, where they showed that their "superior brains" could no more cope with the chaos of Capitalism than could those they affected to despise, the political aristocrats and the business men.

One of the "reforms" supported by the Fabians was the abolition of the House of Lords. They came to be glad that they hadn't succeeded because it was to be a final refuge for a number of Fabians, including Sidney Webb (who wrote the Fabian tract demanding abolition of the Lords), and Attlee, and of course Mr. Snell, who became Lord Snell of Plumstead in 1931 just about the time two million unemployed were wondering how their Fabian trained leaders had managed to get things in such a mess.

Macmillan Must Go!

If we were Labour or Communist vote-catchers we would be campaigning for "Macmillan Must Go!" and telling anyone silly enough to believe it, how successful we had been with our last campaign for "Eden Must Go!"

Since the S.P.G.B. was formed in 1904 there have been ten such campaigns for getting rid of a no-good Prime Minister. There have been rather more than ten governments because some of them, after being pushed, pulled or squeezed out have managed to get back again. When we survey the list we marvel at the rich variety.

Scots, English, Welsh, and half-American (Churchill); spell-binders like Lloyd-George, and others who didn't know how to gild the lilies of oratory; philosophical types like Balfour and Asquith and "plain, blunt men" like Baldwin; semi-Pacifists and war-mongers; business men and professional politicians; the relatively poor and the passing rich; religionists and agnostics; aristocrats and commoners; Tory, Liberal, and Labour.

There are the differences: What of the similarities? They have all had a strange belief that the country was very lucky to have them at the helm. They have all come in generously promising how much better they will make life for the people and have all gone out little lamented.

And what difference has it made in the one thing that ought to be of paramount concern to the workers, the question of establishing Socialism in place of Capitalism? Just no difference at all. That job has yet to be done and it won't matter in the least whether the next Prime Minister who tries to administer Capitalism is Mr. G., or Mr. B., Mr. X or Mr. Y.

"Why We Left the Communist Party"

A group calling themselves the Nottingham Marxist Group, has issued an eight-page leaflet under the above title. As a criticism of the leaders of the British Communist Party from the standpoint of members whose confidence was first shaken by the dethronement of Stalin and then shattered by the Russian Army's onslaught on the Hungarian workers, it is effective enough. But that is all it is. In no way does it justify the claim that the group are Marxist in outlook. Indeed the limited range of their criticism clearly shows that they are not. Their case is against "the politically and morally bankrupt leaders of the Communist Party," but not against the idea of leadership and if it were not for their view that it is in practice impossible to change the leadership they would be working for new leaders in place of the old. They fail to see that a Socialist Party has no use or place for leaders.

They condemn various comparatively recent consequences of dictatorship in Russia and Hungary, but nowhere do they show an understanding of the fact that Socialism is incompatible with dictatorship. They do not explain how it was that they accepted the dictatorship and only woke up to some of its inevitable consequences at a late stage. Above all they do not square their claim

to be Marxist with their tacit acceptance of the absurd belief that the Russian dictatorship is Socialism. This ought to have been the central theme of their declaration because every criticism they make stems from the fact that the social organisation in Russia and Hungary is and always has been Capitalism. They do now see that Socialism cannot be imposed by force and they quote from an American Communist journal:—"Socialism... could not be imposed on a country by those means"; but they do not face up to the truth that that was the original, impossible, aim of the Communist group that seized power in Russia, and that dictatorship and a police state were the inevitable outcome of that attempt. It was then that the Russian Communists "betrayed" the principles of Socialism, not at some later date, as the pamphlet would have us believe, when the "cult of leadership" was carried to such lengths as to endanger the stability of the dictatorship itself.

The Not-so-Stupid Tory Capitalists

The Hon. William Douglas-Home, writer of successful plays and unsuccessful Parliamentary candidate standing on one occasion as a "Progressive Independent," and on another as "Atlantic Charter" candidate, wrote to the *Observer* (3 January, 1957) advising the Tories to apply in foreign politics the policy they have used so well at home. He described the latter as follows:—

"... they never seem to realise that a controlled withdrawal is precisely what they have conducted with considerable skill in domestic policy since the industrial revolution, and that to this policy, and to this policy alone, they owe their survival. Whereas any attempt to preserve the *status quo* would have resulted in either their total extinction or a revolution, or both."

Strikes by Hungarian Workers

On January 13 the Russian imposed government of their Hungarian colony announced a new decree imposing the death penalty for a number of acts, many of which would in most countries be regarded as normal trade union and political activities.

The *Manchester Guardian* (January 14), quoting B.U.P. and Reuter despatches from Budapest, had the following:—

"The death penalty was introduced in Hungary today for anyone calling a strike, damaging factory machinery, or committing 'any kind of offence directed against the State.' The death sentence could be ordered for distributing leaflets, or for entering a government factory without permission, according to the new regulations, announced in a supplementary paragraph to the martial law declared in December."

The *News Chronicle* and other newspapers gave similar versions. Only the *Daily Worker* (January 14) managed to twist this new decree almost out of recognition. They left out the reference to strikes and reported it as:—

"Death sentences may be imposed on people who 'sabotage or interfere in any way with public utilities and other essential enterprises'."

But if the Hungarian workers in Hungary may now be hanged for striking, Hungarian refugees in Britain have shocked a lot of people by refusing jobs offered to them and by coming out on strike. The *Sunday Despatch* (January 16) reported:—

"Eighteen refugees walked out of their jobs at St Albans because they were dissatisfied with their pay. They were receiving an average of £7 a week as cooks, waiters, carpenters and farm workers. Mr. G. P. Bannister, manager of the Employment Exchange at St. Albans, said: 'They expected £14 or £15 a week. Most of them want to go to America or Canada.'"

This sort of conduct will get the Hungarians dis-

liked by the employers and before we know where we are we shall hear the Hungarians denounced as unwelcome agitators. Being spirited in demanding the right to strike in Budapest is not at all the same as continuing to behave like that here.

But British workers ought to be delighted that the refugees do not intend to become a source of cheap and servile labour. And if the incident makes British workers more assertive in trying to raise their wages so much the better.

Exodus to Canada

And while the Hungarians pour in the Britishers pour out as fast as they can, Canada-bound for preference. Rhona Churchill, in the *Daily Mail* (January 8, 1957), made inquiries and these are her conclusions:—

"Emigrant applications at Canada's London and Liverpool offices have now reached 20,000 a week.

John Bull Taxpayer has had enough.

Emigration figures had been falling off. Then suddenly the Butler austerity Budget of October, 1955, doubled the numbers, calling at Canadian immigration offices, the Macmillan squeeze Budget of April, 1956, trebled them, and Suez, with its promise of more Budget austerity three months from now, increased them sixfold.

A quarter of a million Britons, tired of being told for ten austere years: 'Belt-tightening today means prosperity tomorrow,' and, finding that tomorrow never comes, are now actively organising their escape, believing that Britain has no sound financial future to offer their children."

But while the exasperated British workers flee from the rigours of "Welfare State" Capitalism to seek paradise in Canada the Canadian Railwaymen were on strike because they too have grievances against their "free enterprise" Capitalism.

Profits and the Ugly Head of Politics

For a century or more business men, stock exchange speculators and economists have recurrently dreamed of a beautiful world in which Capitalism would function "naturally" without being disturbed by politics. The latest is Mr. A. G. Jenkins, City Editor of the *Empire News* (January 3, 1957).

"So much for the short-term view. Dividend limitation, nationalisation, confiscation and many other 'actions' loom ahead when politics rears its ugly head, and for the moment this may discourage buyers of industrial ordinary shares."

Mr. Jenkins thinks Capitalism would be nicer without the serpent of politics and other "actions." He should think again. If there were no political machine to be controlled by the politicians bent on keeping Capitalism going, our class divided society would disintegrate. One "action" would, indeed, be taken away, but Mr. Jenkins would not be pleased for it is "exploitation," and if there were no exploitation of one class by another there would be no rent, interest or profit, no Stock Exchange, and no City Editors.

Over in Bombay the great Indian iron and steel concern of the Tata Company knows better. They don't want to rule out politics; on the contrary they have just appealed successfully to the High Court for the right to make contributions to political party funds.

"Mr. Justice Tendolkar allowed a petition by the company for confirmation of alteration in its memorandum enabling it to make such contributions. He said that expenditure by way of donations to political parties could in the long run be economic."

"The petition said the company was at present carrying out a Rs. 750m. (£57m.) expansion programme and any further expansion would depend on Government approval. The company's prosperity was therefore bound up with the

policy of the party in power."

(*Financial Times*, 12th January, 1957).

The Indian Capitalists, who used the nationalist movement to establish themselves as a Capitalist India, learned all the tricks and devices of Capitalist rule practised by the British ruling class.

The Communists and the S.P.G.B.

Letters written to the *Daily Worker* by members of the S.P.G.B. have been refused publication recently. This is not in itself surprising but the reason given deserves comment. A letter from the Editor, J. R. Campbell (October 10, 1956) included the following:—

"It is true that the *Daily Worker* does not propose to publish letters dealing with insignificant political bodies like the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Our space is precious and we have to devote it to more important questions."

We can imagine the indignation of the Communists if, say the *Daily Herald* were to give the same reason for not publishing their letters. And of course we can guess that J. R. Campbell (responsible recently for the suppression of reports from Budapest by its own correspondent) may have other reasons for not wanting the Marxist case against his party to be put before his readers.

One small point about Campbell's letter is that he addressed the S.P.G.B. member as "Dear Friend" and ended it "with best wishes."

Another letter (January 7, 1957), this time signed "with all good wishes" by the Assistant Editor of the *Daily Worker*, Mick Bennett, informed our member that "the role and influence of the S.P.G.B. has declined over the years largely because of its conscious deliberate policy of remaining a small sect devoted largely to the theory that until all the working class have been sufficiently educated in Marxism they will not be able to get rid of Capitalism."

This implies that the S.P.G.B. used to have more influence and was therefore worthy of the notice of Communists but, except on very rare occasions, the Communist Party has always maintained the policy of ignoring the

S.P.G.B. and declining debates. But the official reason given for this in the early days was that there was no time or place for discussion because revolution, here and in the world generally, was "just around the corner." Privately members of the C.P.G.B. were advised to keep away from discussion with the S.P.G.B.

Bennett's letter (in the last sentence quoted above) re-iterates the Communist's case that Capitalism could be got rid of in speedier ways than by building up a movement of Socialists. What a pity we can't have from him his explanation of the total failure of Communist governments in Russia, Hungary and elsewhere, to get rid of Capitalism and introduce Socialism.

Brotherly Love from a Christian

A reader sends us an article by Pastor W. W. Kirkby, published in the *Elim Evangel* (December 8, 1956), called "Ambitious Russia," which sets out to describe the imperialist aims of the Russian Government, including, so the writer says, the conquest of Israel as a main objective.

It is full of the common misconceptions about the social system in Russia (the writer of the article thinks it is Communism and that Marx was responsible for it), and about the driving force behind the Russian Imperialism (the writer naturally fails to recognise that it is like the imperialism of the rest of the Capitalist powers).

One interesting item is an alleged quotation from Karl Marx in which he is made to say that as "loving my neighbour" has not changed the world, "let us see what hatred can do." (No source is given).

But just to show how different the Christian and his God are the article ends:—

"Four thousand years ago God declared to Abraham, the father of the faithful: 'I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee.'"

"That principle has been carried out right down the years, and in the future God's curse is to fall upon atheistic and ambitious Russia."

H.

THE "PROSPEROUS" WORKING CLASS

WE are often told, by people who do not really understand its meaning, that poverty no longer exists. Largely they mistake poverty for destitution, and think in terms of pre-war days of dole-queues, hunger marches, and the general hardship suffered from not being able to afford sufficient food, clothing and shelter.

Workers who feel secure in their jobs at the moment must bear in mind that the era of full employment was started by the last world war, when a vast amount of industry was smashed up, and the world market at the end of it had six years dearth of consumer goods to make up, and, all the while, massive preparations have gone on for World War III.

If our measure of prosperity is to be that we have all got "jobs," it still leaves Capitalism, with a great deal to answer for. In the first place, our jobs are not really "ours" at all, because they can be taken away from us, and today, just as before the war, how long they last depends on how long our employers can sell, at a profit, the things we produce.

Neither poverty, nor destitution, has been abolished, and these evils of Capitalism only smite the useful people

of society—the working class. Poverty is not something which depends on what Government is in power, it is a permanent condition of the wage-earning class.

Poverty can be recognised in the existence of hire-purchase; it can be seen amongst the crowds of window-shoppers looking in at the things they cannot afford; it is the reason why workers "save" for holidays, Xmas, clothing or furniture; why they live in low-rent homes; take out insurance against their old age; shop more in Brixton than in Bond Street; buy one necessary thing, and forego others; and generally live from pay-day to pay-day.

There are many other instances of the condition of poverty, but the above will be sufficient to take any heads from the clouds, in order to take a closer look at the world we workers "live" in. Destitution is always a threatening possibility to wage-earners, as their only source of income is through finding hirers, and, as we shall see, all kinds of dire consequences can follow when the hired are dispensed with. The old age pensioners, the disabled, and the sick, can still be found destitute, on the pittance doled out by the "Welfare State."

One example of the prosperity we are all supposed

to be enjoying, comes from a report in the *Daily Express* of 15th October, 1956. In Sutton Coldfield, Warwickshire, the Chamber of Trade is starting a "Black Book" of customers who do not pay. "The idea is to protect traders from people who run up accounts at one shop, and then open accounts at others, when they cannot pay off the first. In another town, housewives may be secretly investigated, and find it difficult to open accounts at a second shop, after exhausting credit at the first."

Mr. Raymond Broad, President of the Chamber said:—

"Many people who formerly paid cash now want credit. Things are getting more difficult for traders."

"Some women in Axminster have been going 10 miles to Honiton, to run up new bills. But a woman who leaves her grocer, when he asks for his money, will find her new grocer more cautious," said Mr. Herbert Jeffery, Secretary of Axminster Chamber of Commerce."

We are sure to be told that people who cannot pay the grocer must be buying television sets or motor-cycles but, after 17 years of full employment, for workers to have to choose between paying the radio shop or the grocer, is poverty.

The *Daily Express*, a day later, carried an even more remarkable story. After we have been told, by Eden and others, of the terrible fate in store for "us," if "we" lose the Suez Canal, the *Express* gives an account of what happened to the family of a reservist, who was called back while the Canal dispute raged. The income of Mrs. Bedford was "chopped from £14.16.0 a week, to 16/- for children's allowances. Food ran out. Her three little daughters, Anne, aged five, Christine, three, Denise, two—began to fret, and then weep with hunger." The mother "broke open the gas meter at her home in St. Paul's Road, Middlesbrough. She was found out. Yesterday, she was conditionally discharged, on payment of 15/- costs. The electricity authorities have cut off the current, because she has not paid the last bill."

It is indeed ironic that the same Capitalist State machine, which took the man away from his work, was responsible for cutting off his electricity, and imposing the Court costs on his wife. Even more remarkable, in view of the story of the Canal being vital to our survival, and the fact that we are told that the public own nationalised electricity.

The eventual allowance from the Army was £4 0s. 6d. per week, and, being a member of the working class, with no property income, Mrs. Bedford had "9d. left out of the allowance, after she had paid:—

Rent	£1 8 9
Clothes on credit	£2 0 0
Furniture, H.P. ...	11 0

Total £3 19 9

This woman had a child "recovering from polio," and "was expecting another baby." Before her allowance arrived, she had taken sheets and blankets off one of the beds, and gone to the pawnbroker with them. "He allowed me 18/-. With that, I bought bread, margarine, and milk, and gave them to the kids. They were ravenous."

The fact that workers do not own the Empire, the oil, or the Country, is often tragically brought home. As the S.P.G.B. pointed out at its formation, "the machinery of Government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the Capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers." (See clause

6 of our Declaration of Principles).

The last example we will give here, is of how the "benevolent" State treats wage-slaves from whom profits cannot be made, as they are too old. It is from a letter to the *Sunday Graphic* for October 14th, 1956:—

"There are large groups of humans, men and women, who suddenly cease to belong economically to the everyday world that swirls around them, almost over them. They grope and scheme for a little food, a little warmth, and, above everything else, a little security."

The writer is a pensioner, aged 71, with a semi-invalid wife.

"We receive a weekly sum of £3 18s. 6d., for all our needs. After budgeting for rent, gas, coal, and clothes, it leaves 6s. a day between us and starvation. And the dread of the winter is on us. The little extra something an old body craves in the winter, is beyond the few shillings needed for sheer necessities to keep alive."

After going to a rally of the Old Age Pensioners' Association, and listening to the speeches by the High Sheriff, a padre, and others, about what must be done, "Hope surged again," and, after the collection was taken, "I trudged back home. My twopenny bus fare was in the plate. The heart and soul shrink from the dreary, hopeless future that stares bleakly at us. For how much longer now? Who knows? Who cares?"

As Socialists, we care about the poverty suffered by workers. We also know how long it will last. It will last as long as the working class are content to work for wages; for as long as they look for solutions to their problems within Capitalism.

Whilst a minority owns the means of production, and profit remains their goal, older workers, who have slowed down, will always have to make way for younger, faster ones. Consideration of human suffering and hardship is a luxury which Capitalism must always place as a poor second to profits. It is only with Socialism that the peoples' needs will count first.

When the means of production are held by society in common, the fruits of our social labour will be available for use. Goods of all kinds will be freely distributed without the barrier of money.

If only workers, young and old, would ponder the possibilities of this sure but simple solution, instead of allowing competing reformist parties to deceive them into the continued support of Capitalism, the misery, poverty, destitution, insecurity, and war threats, with which our whole lives are cursed at present, would be banished for ever.

H. B.

POVERTY OR MISERY: A CORRECTION

In the article "Poverty or Misery" in the January issue (page 5, middle of column 2) reference was made to Mr. Strachey's unjustifiable use of a translation which gave the word "poverty" in place of the German word meaning "misery" in a passage from Marx's *Capital*. This point stands, but error was made with regard to the various editions of *Capital*. The editions in English of Volume I. of *Capital* are:—

(1) The Swan *Sonnenschein* edition (1886) translated by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, is based on the 3rd German. This was the only English edition edited by Engels.

(2) The Charles Kerr edition (1906) is the same translation as the *Sonnenschein*, except for incorporation

of additions and revisions to text made by Engels to the 4th German edition. These amendments to text were translated by Ernest Unterman.

(3) The Allen & Unwin edition (1938) is a facsimile reprint of the *Sonnenschein*. The amendments made by Engels to the 4th German edition, are printed as an appendix. It is only these amendments which Dona Torr translated.

(4) The Allen & Unwin edition (1928) in one volume was newly translated by Eden and Cedar Paul from the 4th German edition. (It was reviewed in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* in March, 1929).

Later on this edition was taken over by Dents and published as two volumes in the *Everyman* series.

ED. COM.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS at HEAD OFFICE

Documentary Films followed by brief Socialist comments at H.Q.

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, S.W.4.

(near Clapham North Tube Station)

Every Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting is then open for questions and discussion which can be continued in the Social Room afterwards when light refreshments will be on sale. Visitors particularly welcome.

Feb. 3rd "This is United Nations"—Helen Rose

" 10th "Indonesia Calling"—E. Lake

" 17th "Houses in History"—Kilner

" 24th "Challenge in the Desert"—L. Dale

March 3rd "Mass Production"—J. Haynes

ISLINGTON BRANCH LECTURE

at

Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7.

Thursday, 14th February at 8 p.m.

"Early American History"—C. Wilson.

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ... 11.15 a.m.—2 p.m.
3.30—6 p.m.

East Street
(Walworth) ... Feb. 3rd 12.30 p.m.
" 10th 11 a.m.
" 17th 12.30 p.m.
" 24th 11 a.m.

Whitstone Pond
(Hampstead) ... 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park ... 11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Lincoln's Inn Fields ... Tuesdays & Fridays
Finsbury Pavement ... Tuesdays
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

Copies of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* are on sale at the newspaper stands as named below. Members and sympathisers are asked to buy from these stands when possible:—

"THE BLACKSTOCK": Finsbury Park. (Sunday morning).

"PRINCES HEAD": Battersea Park Road. (Daily—mornings).

GREAT PORTLAND ST. Tube Station: (Sunday morning).

"RED LION": Kingsbury Rd., Hendon. Sunday morning).

RUSSELL Sq. Tube Station: (Daily).

SHEPHERDS BUSH Tube Station: (Daily—morning).

WIMBLEDON Stn.: (Daily—morning).

WEALDSTONE Station (Sunday morning).

KENTON Station (Sunday morning).

HAMMERSMITH—King Street. (SMITH'S (not W. H.) Newsagents).

HOLLOWAY: Paper shop, D. Johnston, Brecknoch Road.

FINSBURY PARK STATION: Main paper stall.

NAG'S HEAD, HOLLOWAY: Main paper stall.

HIGHBURY CORNER: Main paper stall—station.

COLLIERS WOOD: Underground Station (Daily—morning)

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.
DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Bennie Road, Dundee.
EDINBURGH. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh
OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

HACKNEY BRANCH LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS NOW on Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

at
Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney, E.8.

Feb. 6th "Strategic Positions" ... J. D'Arcy
 " 13th "The Rent Bill" ... A. Ivimey
 " 27th "The Communist Party and
 Hungary" ... L. Bryan
 Mar. 6th Film Show. "Big Money" ... E. Hardy

ARE YOU A MEMBER?

Socialism is worth all the effort that can be put in to achieve it. Progress towards Socialism depends largely upon the number of Socialists organised together to obtain it. The larger the number the more propaganda can be done and the quicker we will get there.
 On the inside of the back page of this issue you will find set out our object and Declaration of Principles. If you agree with them your place is in our ranks.

GLASGOW (KELVINGROVE) BRANCH "THE IMMEDIATE NEED FOR SOCIALISM"

Speaker—A. Mulhaddon
 ST. ANDREWS HALLS
 (Enter by Door G, Berkley St.)
 Sunday, 17th February, at 7.30 p.m.
 (Doors open 7 p.m.)

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

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BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. Feb. 7th and 21st.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 34, St. George's Square, S.W.1, Thursdays at 8 p.m.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (Feb. 6th and 20th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, Feb. 4th and 18th at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney. Sec.: A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to G. Stead, 38, Lichfield Road, N.W.2. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. (Feb. 13th, and 27th) at Vienna Restaurant, 289, Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 11, Oakfield Road, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

MANCHESTER Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, Feb. 12th and 26th, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec.: J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. Phone: DIDSbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

S.W. LONDON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o. Head Office.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisley, 17, Coiswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae" Farm Crescent Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsay 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

LEWISHAM BRANCH PUBLIC MEETING YOUR VOTE

Tory Liberal Labour
 or Socialist?

Speakers: L. BRYAN and E. WILMOTT
 DAVENPORT CO-OPERATIVE HALL, DAVENPORT ROAD,
 RUSHEY GREEN, CATFORD, S.E.6
 Thursday, February 7th, 1957
 at 7.30 p.m.

Admission FREE. Questions: Discussion.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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THE OPENING

CRISES AND MR. STRACHEY

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

Britain in Deep Water

ALL WITHIN A FEW DAYS, Ken Jones was dropped from the Welsh Rugby Union XV. and Sir Anthony Eden resigned the Prime Ministership of Great Britain; that should be sensation enough for one week. Jones, they said, was out of form and Eden was ill. If the former's disappointment was a symptom of the unhappy plight of Welsh Rugby, then the latter's retirement was as surely indicative of the decline of British power in the world, steepened by recent events and the failure of the Eden administration to deal with them successfully. This article will discuss aspects of the recent crisis and, perhaps rather riskily, engage in some speculation about it.

Hostile to Britain

While Eden was an acutely sick man no illness has been diplomatically more opportune for, as his enemies in the newspapers put it, his policy was in ruins. Apart from other matters, the venture to seize the Suez Canal was a complete failure. Militarily, this operation could hardly have gone amiss—something else must have been responsible for the failure and the apparent lack of any clear-cut British intention. With hardly a doubt, this was the policy of the United States, which opposed the Anglo-French operation because the Americans are themselves determined to control the Middle East and the copious oilfields to be found there. This policy is no recent development; in the *Evening Standard* (5th October, 1953), Lord Hailsham, who is known to be sensitive on the point, wrote that: '... since the middle of the war the policy of the American Government in the Mediterranean has been almost always hostile to British interests.' A few weeks ago we heard of Mr. Dulles' preference for being a Doughboy alone in the Middle East, rather than with British and French troops alongside. Even taking into account his later modification, it does seem that he let an outsize cat out of his Bag and was in fact stating the authentic State Department attitude towards Middle Eastern affairs.

Whatever the truth, it is a fact that Great Britain has now almost entirely lost out in the Middle East and United States influence in the areas is strong to the point of being dominant. The latest blast of U.S. foreign policy—the Eisenhower doctrine, with its promise of military and economic intervention—has set the seal on the situation. It may be remarked that, whilst on the face of it the doctrine is aimed against Russian ambitions, there is a certain amount of evidence that this is not quite so. An open attack by Russia, which is needed to bring the doctrine into operation, is most unlikely. On the other hand, recent

4^D

statements by American politicians have sounded like an invitation to the Kremlin to move in by other means. On May 1st, 1956, Mr. Christian Herter said at the Chicago Institute of Foreign Relations: "We should offer to co-ordinate our aid with whatever assistance the Soviet Union is willing to provide. If the Soviet Union proposed to build a steel mill, we should not feel bound to offer to build the same mill on more favourable conditions. We should, on the contrary, be willing to work out both with the Soviets and with the recipient country a programme to which both the Soviets and ourselves can each contribute." (*Weekly Review*, 4/1/57.)

Nobody need be surprised at the prospect of a Russo-American line up in the Middle East; the exigencies of Capitalism have been known to throw together stranger bedfellows.

Indian Ambitions

We should also not disregard the ambitions of the rising Indian Capitalist class in this struggle. Mr. Nehru has lately been coming and going from side to side of the Iron Curtain, although only recently he was suspected by Americans of being too sympathetic to Russian interests. It is an interesting thought that he may have been carrying messages between Washington and Moscow. What is more certain is that India promises to become a powerful factor in the troubles of the Middle East and to play her part in replacing the defeated British power. This would indeed be a bitter irony to the Foreign Office, that the departing Britishers should be replaced by two countries—India and the U.S.A.—who were once under London's colonial thumb!

Serious though the defeat in the Middle East is for the British Capitalists, it is only the latest of the reverses which their policy has suffered since the end of the war. Apart from Egypt, there are the Far East, Australia and the Caribbean—all areas where the words of Whitehall lack their former power. The U.S. State Department has undoubtedly been the cause of much of this decline—and their preoccupation with the curtailment of British international power has often been pursued under the guise of some high-flown discussion, on human rights and liberties. In the *Manchester Guardian* of 25th November, 1953, Mr. A. J. P. Taylor, wrote that "The (Atlantic) Charter was . . . a by product of the Atlantic meeting (of Churchill and Roosevelt). The real purpose . . . was to co-ordinate supplies and naval strategy. But the Americans had been alarmed by Keynes's prophecy that 'the post-war world economic structure could only be one of closed economies. They wished to tie Great Britain down to a liberal economic system, not to make a declaration of principles against Hitler.' Other meetings of the war leaders, such as the Yalta conference, confirmed the American desire to break the imperial preference tie-up which the United Kingdom had built and to nose her out of her colonies. The reverse in the Middle East may be very nearly the last straw for British Capitalists, jeopardising as it has their supplies of vital oil. (The *Economist* of 10th November, 1956, estimated that 70 per cent. of this country's oil supply was cut off by the blockage of the Suez Canal).

A Conspiracy?

This reliance for an essential fuel upon the facilities of so unstable an area as the Middle East is rather strange. Opinion in some technical quarters

has it that no real effort is being made in Britain to find substitutes for oil, and there is a certain amount of evidence to fortify it. Apparently obstruction seems to have hindered at least one attempt to produce a substitute for petrol. The *Manchester Guardian* of 11th February, 1957, reported on the results of efforts in this field by a Yorkshire firm of manufacturing chemists. The manager of the firm said that " . . . the Government stopped one ingredient so we formulated another. . . . When we approached the suppliers . . . we were told they had given an undertaking to the Board of Trade that they would not let it go . . . we . . . now have had to write off the idea."

A move to offset the encroachments of the U.S. Capitalist class is to be seen in the projected European Common market. If the State Department smiles upon such schemes, it can only be because they regard them as turning the attention of European countries away from the markets which America wishes to exploit and as bringing pressure upon Great Britain to weaken her imperial preference system. Anyway, the last laugh must be with Washington—the control they now have upon Europe's oil supplies puts any such economic organisation under their thumb. We have seen what this means to European industry in the activities of the Texas Railroad Commission.

The threatened loss of their oil and enforced dependence upon United States mercies seems to have thrown British ruling circles into something akin to a panic. To add to their difficulties, the national unity which is usual at such times of crisis has been conspicuously absent. Such powerful organs of opinion as the *Manchester Guardian*, *Observer* and *Economist*, strongly opposed the Suez war and demanded Eden's head in compensation. This indicates a serious division in British Capitalist thinking—possibly a revolt by industrial interests against the favoured oilmen. It is under such circumstances that a Churchill, or a Lloyd George can, by reason of his political acumen, assume the rôle of a great unifier and on the strength of this come to power. Sure enough, we have lately seen a considerable improvement in the standing of the perspicacious Mr. Aneurin Bevan, so that even the Tory papers who were once screaming for his blood now champion his cause against that of Mr. Gaitskell.

Crumbling Visions

The conflict in Egypt and the confusion which it has thrown up are nothing new to us; they are an accepted part of the Capitalist social system. The unpalatable fact is that it is the working class, in these bad times as well as in the supposedly good, who are on the dirty end of the stick. The petrol shortage has exposed some redundancy in the car and other industries and so hundreds of workers are seeing their vision of lifelong prosperity dissolve in the reality of the queue at the Labour Exchange. If it is any consolation, other visions are crumbling too. Great Britain's Middle East policy of playing off and on and propping up puppet rulers, native armies and corrupt governments, has collapsed and the United States is picking up the pieces. A perilous, strenuous time for British Capitalism and those who try to organise it. Perhaps, after all, Sir Anthony was on to a good thing when he threw in the towel and caught the first boat for the Pacific.

KNIFE AND IVAN.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," March, 1907)

Progress

The 1905 criminal statistics recently issued from the Home Office show that while there is a decline in convictions for drunkenness, manslaughter, bigamy, and malicious wounding, there is nevertheless a significant increase in burglaries and crimes against property with violence. Sir John Macdonell says in his summary "The enormous preponderance of crimes against property is remarkable; nearly nine-tenths of the whole fall every year within that category."

Indictable offences have increased from a yearly average of 51,612 during 1896—1900 to 61,463 in 1905. While, instead of drink being the cause of crime, drunkenness has declined while crime has increased.

The above figures on the not very large increase is the number of indictable offences between 1896 and 1905 need to be compared with the staggering increase since

that date. In an address to the Edinburgh Rotary Club in 1955 Sir Sydney Smith, formerly of the Department of Forensic Medicine at Edinburgh University, had this to say:—

" . . . members of the community showed far too little interest in the serious problem of crime. In 1900, he said, there were 50,000 indictable crimes, compared with 500,000 in 1953. Crimes of violence had risen from 3,500 to 23,000, housebreaking cases from 77,000 to 400,000." (Report in *Manchester Guardian*, 18/2/55.)

In the article in March, 1907 the SOCIALIST STANDARD writer related the increase of crime to the "greater distress and unemployment among the people." While these factors play a part the enormous increase during the post-war years of very low unemployment show that the rest of the pressures, tensions and frustrations of Capitalism at peace and war, have combined to make the 1905 figures almost insignificant.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Paddington Branch has had a full programme for the past few months. Now, once every month, an evening is devoted to critical discussion on the current SOCIALIST STANDARD. At a prior meeting individual members choose a particular article which they will closely study in the meantime. Then, on the appointed evening both the effectiveness and shortcomings of the chosen article are gone into thoroughly. Paddington Branch hope that in this way they will be contributing to the improvements of our journal which so richly deserves a wider readership.

With the dual aim of making the Party's point of view known and improving their own knowledge, the Branch have invited several representatives of significant non-Socialist organisations to visit the Branch. Mr. E. S. (Solly) Sachs, the former General Secretary of the South African Workers Union, whose opposition to the division of the South African Trade Union movement on racial lines was one of the reasons for his virtual exile from that country, spoke on the history of the South African working class. On another occasion a local Communist came to face the Branch's passionate condemnation of his Party's record.

The Branch will certainly continue their efforts to stress the world-wide nature of Socialism when a Movement of Colonial Freedom representative visits the Branch to be followed soon after by someone from Argentina. Members are themselves encouraged to address the Branch, giving a Socialist slant on the fields in which they have especial interest. Two notable occasions were Comrade Warlow's talk on automation and Ian Jones's on the social significance of the plays of Bertold Brecht.

Chelsea and Fulham Branch. Owing to the illness of two or three members of the Branch and the transfer of another, and the difficulties of others to attend Branch meetings, all activity was suspended for the latter part of last year and the first weeks of this year. The Branch is now meeting again on the first and third Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square (Com.

Wilcox, top flat), S.W.1. The Branch Secretary is Comrade Newell, to whom all correspondence should be addressed at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Lectures and discussions are being arranged and the Branch hopes to commence outdoor meetings at Gloucester Road and Earls Court in the beginning of April. Members, sympathisers and readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD will be welcomed to all the indoor and outdoor meetings.

Obituary. We regret to learn of the death on 28th December last, of Comrade Donald Fincham at the age of 79. He was a member for many years and staunchly put the Party case on every possible occasion to his work-mates. We extend to his family our sincere sympathy and condolences.

Meeting. At the Peace Pledge Union, 6, Endsleigh Street, W.C.1, on Thursday, 7th March, at 8 p.m. Here our Comrade Read will talk on "War, its Causes and Remedy." Admission free, Questions and Discussion. P.H.

IMPORTANT TO ALL LONDON MEMBERS MID-DAY MEETINGS

We can resume the meetings at Lincoln's Inn Fields provided that those members who are free can keep the pitch free from parking cars. The period a Comrade should attend is 10.15 a.m. till 12 noon. A number of speakers are prepared to speak provided they can be sure of the speaking pitch.

This station is well worth maintaining, so members PLEASE HELP ASSIST THE PARTY in continuing to maintain this excellent propaganda station.

Propaganda Committee.

HOW WELL IS THE "WELFARE STATE"

A number of European countries which have or had Pseudo-Socialist Governments (the kingdoms of Britain, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Holland, or where Labour and Social Democratic Parties are in coalition governments with avowed Capitalist parties as in Austria) are styled "Welfare States." The term is not used for Russia and her satellites behind the iron curtain; they style themselves Communist but, as the Socialist Party of Great Britain has pointed out ever since the Russian upheaval in 1917 (see summary of articles collected in the pamphlet "Russia since 1917"), Russia with all the basic features of a Capitalist mode of production and with the workers' lack of understanding Socialism, cannot be a Socialist state. Events have not only proved the correctness of our contention, but revealed the sorry fact that the tyranny which the 1917 upheaval overthrew was replaced by another variety in many respects even more hideous.

If in the course of social development even Capitalism has to be considered as a step in man's march forward to a classless, moneyless, frontierless and povertyless society, future generations will nevertheless stand aghast at the gruesomeness of the episodes by which that stage is marked. Cruel as the French Revolution of 1798 was, which, like Russia in 1917, also marked the end of Feudalism and the advent of Capitalism it was almost a par-lour affair in comparison with Russia. As if their past orgies of massacres and deportations of millions to forced labour, and as if last year's Treaty with Austria (after 10 years of military occupation and loot), by which the Russian Government secured, as the price for their withdrawal from this country, such important industrial and territorial concessions, rights of mineral exploitation, control of installations extending over 10 and more years, in addition to a payment of 150 million dollars ransom, had not been enough to show their Capitalist character, we have now to witness the bloody slaughter of Hungarian workers, showing still more glaringly the hideous face of the Russian variety of the Capitalist monster.

Just as Great Britain and France are fighting to regain control of the Suez Canal, Russia is fighting to keep control of Hungary's factories, rich mines and mineral Springs, chemical industry, Uranium deposits, and of the mass of exploitable cheap Hungarian labour, yielding huge profits with which to finance Russia's gigantic armament programme. The strategic importance of Hungary is another asset in the Russian scheme of things.

But lest the reader thinks of the Western "Welfare States" as holding the key to peace in the world and to the solution of the social problems, or to be on the road to Socialism, the following should enlighten him.

The "Welfare State" continues the status quo, i.e. the private and State ownership of the means and instruments of wealth production, exploitation of man by man through the wages system, and production of the means of life for sale and profit. The Socialist attitude is uncompromising hostility to Capitalism in all its forms and variations, since Socialists are only interested in, and stand for a fundamental change of the economic basis of society and of the status of the workers of the world.

The reader can judge the conditions in one of the typical "Welfare-States"—Austria—and form his own opinion on the merits of this latest description.

Austria as it really is

Centred as it really is it would not be surprising if the foreign visitor and tourist who comes to Austria, bent on sightseeing and enjoyment during a holiday, learns and sees no more of the country than its scenic beauty of mountains and valleys, forests and lakes, some of its historic monuments, medieval castles and ruins of ancient strongholds, its palaces, monasteries, abbeys with their centuries old libraries and other cultural treasures. Visitors to Vienna may also see the extensive municipal tenement houses, the great building activity, the huge blocks of flats in process of construction, as for example opposite the Opera House to replace the Henrichshof burned down in 1945 with all its hundreds of luxurious apartments. Close by, huge business premises are arising from the ashes of the de Luxe Hotel Bristol, whilst other luxury hotels on the Ringstrasse which had been occupied by Russian military personnel, are now considered uninhabitable by their international clientele of parasites. Visitors may learn too that only after 10 years of repair work was it possible to reopen last November the two national theatres. The venerable St. Stephen's Cathedral is still surrounded by scaffolding, and visitors can see right opposite it the plain and not so beautiful new buildings as glaring proof of how near the famous old church itself was to total destruction through bombing and fighting during the war.

Visitors coming for purposes of trade, and Trade Union and other delegations, may, in addition see or be shown over some of the more important industrial enterprises, dams and power stations, social welfare centres and institutions, etc., etc.

Those who had been to Vienna some years before, will be struck by the sight of new and resplendent railway stations. Of the six stations three were bombed out of existence, but out of the ruins of the others there have arisen the new Westbahnhof and the Südost station.

Visitors will note too the shops stocked with commodities of every imaginable kind from the four corners of the earth, and the streets swarming with vehicles of every description, from Cadillacs to Volkswagens.

The average visitor accustomed to judging by appearances cannot but be impressed by what he must consider as evidence of prosperity of the country, until his attention is drawn to the reverse side of the medal. It is indeed when one looks beneath the surface of things and enquires under what conditions the people live and do all this work and operate all these services, that to talk of welfare and prosperity is not only a very superficial description but utterly untrue as far as the lot of the mass of the people is concerned.

It cannot be denied that there is prosperity—in some quarters. There are about 600 Austrians who state their taxable annual income to be more than one million schillings which even at only one million works out at 3,000 Austrian schillings per DAY, but 47 per cent. of the social insured persons have to exist on an income that does not rise above \$1,100 per MONTH (about £15), whilst tens of thousands have no more than a few hundred schillings for a whole month to live on.

Among the prosperous ones are also the managers and administrators of the State, the Welfare-State—its Presidents, Ministers, State-Secretaries, Professional Poli-

ticians, the President and functionaries of the Federation of Trade Unions, the Directors of the Banks including the Workers Bank, of the Mineral Oil Administration (nine directors chosen from the "Socialist" Party of Austria and 11 from the Volkspartei), the Directors of the National Bank (four from each of the parties), and the rest of the managers of the foul exploiting system of Capitalism, which for all these leaders of the two big political parties is indeed a veritable "welfare state."

While business is booming and bringing millions of extra profits to shareholders of the industrial enterprises like the Steyr-Daimler-Puch-Werke, the Voest, the Veitscher Magnesit, the Alpine Montan A.G., the Socony Vacuum Petroleum Co., the Fiat, Elin, Böhler, and the others, the workers of practically every industry have been forced to strike or threaten to strike within the last 12 months, starting with the municipal tramwaymen early in the year. One of the last industries to follow in the series were the bakers who, after a week's strike, succeeded in getting their wages increased by a miserable few shillings, whilst the bosses are now making extra profits to the tune of more than 40 million S per year out of the promptly raised prices of all bread products. The civil servants who, before the election in May, had been promised wage adjustments, could only enforce them by the threat of a strike.

The fact alone that the wealth-producers are forced to constantly fight, threaten and eventually resort, to strikes to prevent their standard of living, low as it is, from sinking still deeper, and that they can be locked out and victimized for propagating and taking protective action, should long have taught them and roused them to a realisation that they are a downtrodden and humiliated class. Here is concrete evidence that the "Welfare State" has not altered their degrading position.

To begin with, in order to live at all, a property-less person—and they are 90 per cent. of the people—must have a job with some property-owner, an employer. Since the workers have not even the right to work, they find themselves thrown upon the labour market, reduced to begging the chance to work, degraded to the level of a mere commodity like chalk or cheese, exposed to all the insecurity and the general vicissitudes of a market, and, when employed, they are robbed through the wages system. If the word "robbed" is considered to be an exaggeration or an unscientific term, the question must be asked and answered: Since value and wealth is produced ONLY by the application of human labour power to nature-given material, where does the accumulated wealth, and where do the profits come from, if not from the unpaid labour of the workers? And why does the working-class, in spite of all their labour and 100 years of the most astounding technical progress, remain poor?

Winter Unemployment reaches 100,000

"It is incorrect," said the Austrian Sozialminister Proksch "to speak of full employment in this country. We have no full employment as long as we have the problem of unemployment in winter." Whilst unemployment is highest in winter, the figures for the other seasons are invariably around the 100,000 mark. So that the constant talk by the rest of the politicians and the *Arbeiter Zeitung* that there is full employment, is not only incorrect, but downright deceiving humbug, especially when it is well known that considerable parts of the country have been "depressed areas" for years. In Berndorf where

the Austrian Krupp Works before the war employed some 5,000 workers in the production of high-class metal goods, but are now practically at a standstill, all hopes of the building up of a new industry have been dashed, just as there is now bitter disappointment in other parts where the signing of the State Treaty in May, 1955, had been expected to bring relief. "If help is not soon forthcoming, the situation will become catastrophic," declared the report after the conference of the Socialist Party of Austria. Most of the workers there have been on the dole for years. All the other towns in the area, the largest of which is Neustadt, are sending appeal after appeal to the Government in Vienna for help in their appalling plight. "Ominously looms over the town the question what is to be done when, in a few years, the reconstruction work has been completed?" Thus the Labour politicians and the *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, who are always telling the workers of "our" oil, "our" iron, and "our" magnesit, and who refer to "our" nationalized industries as being the property of the people, clearly admit this talk to be so many lies and so much humbug. For, if the workers owned these things, or even a fraction of the country's wealth produced by them (and by them alone), there could not arise such a problem as "what is to become of the workers when the work has been completed." It can arise only where the mass of the people, the working-class, are IN this society, but not OF it, where they are just so many hands to do the work and make Profit for those who DO own the land and the factories and the means of transport, and do it all for just the bare necessities of life and to pro-create their kind. In other words where the name worker is synonymous with poor. It would seem that catastrophes such as earthquakes, floods, tornadoes and wars bringing destruction and devastation, are welcomed by the workers since they provide work—reconstruction work—and make for full employment, which is all the Labour politicians seem to be concerned with in the Welfare State.

Imagine also the incongruity of the Minister for nationalized industries, i.e. for the industries that have become the "property of the people," sending out circulars appealing to the managers of those industries to do their utmost to "provide jobs for workers old and infirm who are hit by misfortune of physical disabilities or unemployment." In other words: here are people said to be the owners of the chief industries in this "one of the richest countries in Europe," living nevertheless in dire poverty, still compelled to go, cap in hand, humbly begging the chance of a job—in their own industry! You might well ask: How come that—as even the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* has to confess—"if in a working-class family husband and wife do not both earn, there is hardly enough money for the most necessary things, and if there is a child, the purchase of a suit or even a pair of shoes is a problem."

(To be continued.)

DEBATE AT BRISTOL

Wednesday, March 20th, at 7 p.m.
HERMES ROOM, GUILDHALL CHAMBERS,
26, Broad Street, Bristol 1.

"IS RUSSIA SOCIALIST?"

Socialist Party of Great Britain - H. Baldwin
Communist Party - B. Henderson

THE OPENING

THERE is nothing peculiar about Cwm Glo. It is a mining village, one of hundreds to be found in the valleys of South Wales, owing its origin and continuing to draw its sustenance from the colliery that casts the shadow of its slag pyramids over the rows of houses that line the valley floor. Were it not that some months ago the "Legion" Club had moved into its new premises, Cwm Glo would not have warranted a single sentence in a Socialist journal. Don't get us wrong; no revolution has occurred; no National newspaper has shown the least interest in the place; nothing has happened that has occasioned as much as a question in Parliament. Yet the incident of "the opening" is not without its interest to anyone with a finger on the pulse of society and a Socialist is of necessity, such a person.

As we were saying, the "Legion" Club was to be re-opened in new and shiny premises. Short of having the Bishop and local M.P. present, everyone else of note was invited, including the local councillors, the vicar, and, to uphold the military tradition associated with the movement, Col. Hughes (ret.), together with a company of territorials, was to attend.

The highlight of the ceremony was to be the unveiling of the "Roll of Honour" now cemented into its new place in the imposing "foyer" with the addition of two names—local lads killed in Malaya. The Committee, despite the necessity of having to have the "big guns" present decided to ask old Phill Davies, their oldest member, to unveil the plaque and say a few appropriate words in conjunction with the vicar. Phill had been reluctant at the outset, but worse was to follow. A week before the big event, old Phill died. We will never know whether the occasion was too great, or whether a heart weakened by years of straining in a body rent by 1916 gas and 40 years coal dust was the cause or not, but there it was—he died.

Anyhow, after considerable discussion and much running around, it was decided to ask old "Price Committee" to stand in his place. Even though he was not a member, Price was the obvious choice, being their spokesman at any discussion or negotiations with the management at the "pit" or the N.C.B.

Price agreed. The proceedings went according to plan; the councillors had their say, the vicar said his piece and the Col. and his men put up a brave show. By this time the members' eyes were beginning to stray in the direction of the gleaming beer pumps standing like a row of inviting virgins as yet unsullied but full of the promise of future delights.

Price stepped forward to speak as the last strains of "Land of Hope and Glory" died away. "Friends and fellow workers," he began "Not being a member of your Club, I thank you for allowing me to act on your behalf. I bear in mind the two purposes for which I am here—to honour the memory of those dead, including our latest loss, old Phill, and to launch this Club on its new career. I am at one with you all as regards the former even though I am not in the least interested in the latter. I am old enough to remember most of the boys whose names adorn this plaque" (Price turned for a moment towards the tablet). "I certainly can speak for old Phill. He was my 'butty.' We disagreed over many things, including his



attitude to the 'British Legion,' and his views on religion." Price looked straight at the Vicar, who appeared to be most uncomfortable. The two reporters began to take some interest in the proceedings. The worthy gentlemen on the platform began to sense that something had gone wrong; one or two of the committee members looked at their colleagues with a "I told you so" attitude on their faces. Price continued quietly and deliberately, "These boys were ours, Phill was one of us, both were torn from us and were sacrificed on behalf of those who live by the sweat and life blood of the working class. Those whose names are on this plaque died young and are acknowledged as patriots. Phill's death was more protracted. He always 'did his best' as he put it. A 'best' which nevertheless only succeeded in keeping him poor after years of sacrifice on behalf of Capitalism in peace and war." There were now distinct murmurs all round, the worthies on the platform shuffled uncomfortably, the Vicar flushed and Hughes Col. reddened appreciably. Price carried on: "I knew them all and I pay my tribute. To conclude, let me but add: Old Phill symbolises all of our kind. After a life of toil in the pits; after a life serving in peace and war, a vast Empire on which the sun never sets Brother Phill Davies has gone with the others—to that vast insatiable graveyard that is the end of the road for those who have served. His share of the Empire has been duly earned—6ft. of clay. He came by his own in the end."

Price walked down from the dais and out of the hall in complete silence. In the general hubbub that followed, the "dignitaries" walked off the platform; the excitement flowed along with the members into the bar. The beer pumps began their work.

The occasion was, to the credit of the *Valley Voice* given a deal of prominence. Discussions continued in the Club and elsewhere, for weeks; letters were sent to the Press for and against Price's speech. In time it all died away. All, did we say? Well nearly all, except that Price finds it easier to get a hearing these days. He also finds it easier to get his mates to read the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*.

There you see, there has certainly been no revolution in Cwm Glo, no questions have been asked in Parliament. But some few workers in a little mining community have begun to think and to a Socialist that is something. W. BRAIN.

SOCIALISM AND THE INTELLECTUALS

A Confession of Impotence

THE Fabian Society have just issued Tract No. 304. It is by Kingsley Amis and is entitled *Socialism and the Intellectuals*. On the inside of the cover we are told that he is "a poet, novelist, literary critic and lecturer in English at the University College of Swansea. Author of the widely-acclaimed and best-selling *Lucky Jim*." Having read this we rubbed our eyes and looked at the title again, but right enough it was *Socialism and the Intellectuals*.

That the Fabian Society should have thought that this statement of Mr. Amis' qualification was a reason for giving weight to his pronouncements in a field quite foreign to him is an example of how foreign the field is to the futile Fabian Society—futile as far as understanding and changing the present basis of society is concerned.

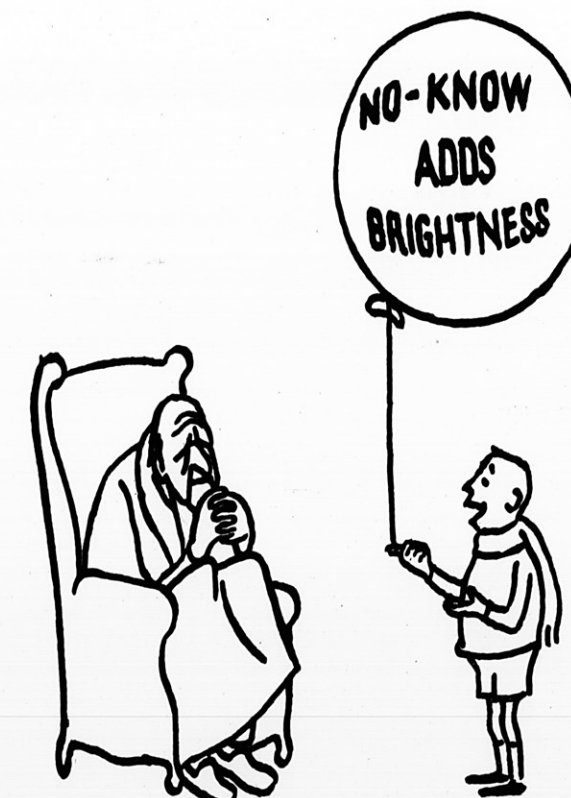
We asked ourselves why on earth was a man with the qualifications mentioned straying into a field that must be practically unknown territory to him? We read the opening sentences of the pamphlet and were still more bewildered, for this is how he begins: "As will soon become obvious from what I have to say, I am not a politician, nor am I specially well informed about politics." After reading the pamphlet we came to the conclusion that the last phrase was too modest; he obviously is not informed at all! As he puts it on page 10: "The intelligentsia—and once more I include myself—doesn't understand economics." However, this does not prevent him from saying what should and should not be done! Nor does it prevent him from adopting the patronising attitude that is typical of his kind.

In spite of the title there is not a word of explanation of Socialism in the whole pamphlet, though the word is used a few times. The inference we gather from his remarks is that Socialism is what the Labour Party stands for, and Marxism is what the Russian State stands for.

Before he comes to a definition of the Intelligentsia Mr. Amis has some illuminating remarks to make on himself. He tells us that his father was an "office worker" and "I grew up in a modest but comfortable lower middle-class house in the London suburbs." Here one can find the outlook of the man laid bare. He could not say "working class," it would have stuck in his priggish throat. He was a scholarship boy at a London day school "and, also on a scholarship, studied English at one of the less pretentious Oxford colleges." How beautifully indefinite and smug this is. In other words his father depended upon the sale of his labour power in an office, at what job we don't know, in order to obtain the means to live and keep his family. We gather that Mr. Amis also depends for his livelihood upon the sale of his labour power in order to live, in spite of the scholarships. But the thought of identifying himself with the working class, of which in fact he is a member is abhorrent to him, just as it is abhorrent to his fellow so-called intellectuals.

Here is how he defines the Intellectual:

"I want to make a few distinctions and definitions. I take as my general field of reference the middle-class intellectual, using the phrase in a pretty wide sense. One could reel off a fairly long list of the occupations pursued by the kind of people I am discussing, and this may be helpful in attaining some sort of precision. I mean occupations like those uni-



"Brought you a nice balloon of hot air, you poor old Fabian dad, you."

versity, college and school teachers, perhaps the lower ranks of the civil service, journalists, industrial scientists, librarians, G.P.'s, some of the clergy (predominantly the non-conformist sects?) and the various brands of literary and artistic, or arty intellectual." (Page 2.)

There you have it. It will be seen that the groups he mentions all depend for a livelihood upon selling their mental and physical energies, just as John Smith the mechanic does, or Bill Jones, the fish porter. In fact they are all members of the working class. But this prosaic fact would take the self-imposed gilt off the scholarship boy produced by the "lower middle class." A pity he didn't go further in his precision. We would be interested to know what group he would designate as the "middle middle-class" and the "upper middle-class."

All through the pamphlet Mr. Amis sets his group apart from the rest of society as a group that has no interest to defend. This is how he puts it on page 6:

"Anyway, by his station in society the member of the intelligentsia really has no political interests to defend, except the very general one (the one he most often forgets) of not finding himself bossed around by a totalitarian government. But compared with, say, a steelworker or a banker, he is politically in a void. Furthermore, he belongs to no social group which might lend him stability."

This is the sort of rubbish that comes from the attitude of superiority; an attitude that has belonged to the Fabian Society from its inception. How does Mr. Amis think the teachers have reached their present status except by the struggles of the past? And how do they get their jobs except by setting forth their qualifications to their employers and hoping they will be the applicants chosen? In other words they act in a similar way to that of other

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE UNIFICATION OF EUROPE

THE MacMillan Government, with the general support of the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress, is going ahead with the scheme to associate Britain with a European free trade area that is being built up round a separate, more closely integrated "common market" of Germany, France, Italy, Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg. The six countries in the "common market" aim by stages to abolish customs barriers and free movements of labour and capital within the area. The larger "free trade area" is a sort of half-way house to full integration; in particular British food production and imports would continue to be on the basis of preference for Commonwealth countries.

The motive for the decision of the Government to go in is the powerful one that British industry cannot afford to keep out. When the European "common market" area is formed, with a protected market of 250 million people, thus enabling mass production industries to operate on a scale that will justify the necessary enormous investments of capital, British manufacturers fear that they will be undercut, not only in Europe, but in world markets; for the 50 million population of Britain is far too small a market to serve as foundation for modernised industry. For British Capitalism it is a question of getting into the European group or being crushed by the three great production areas that will then exist, America, Russia and United Europe.

Beaverbrook Unrepentant

The Express group of newspapers fights a rearguard action for Empire development and "Keep out of Europe," and accuses the Government, not without justification, of taking this step without a mandate from the electors. The Sunday Express (10/2/57) charges MacMillan on this score with "downright political dishonesty," and quotes from Design of Europe, a pamphlet of which the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Peter Thorneycroft, was chief author, an admission that no

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Government could hope in advance, to get the electors to agree:—

"The people must be led slowly and unconsciously into the abandonment of their traditional economic defences."

The Sunday Express prophesies that if the Government has its way the voters will first realise what has happened when "a million of them wake up one morning to find themselves unemployed." What the Express writer has in mind is the fact, readily admitted by the advocates of European integration, that while some British industries may gain by having access to a European market, others, notably textiles and perhaps the motor industry, will find themselves unable to compete with German and other producers.

The German Customs Union of last century

The dilemma of the British Government and Capitalists recalls a parallel development of over a century ago. To enable German industry to take its place among the industrial nations in the first half of the 19th century the Prussian Government gradually built up a customs union, first for its own scattered territories, then for the other states in the then disunited Germany. This was to lead eventually to the United Germany that in colonial expansion, wars against Denmark, Austria and France, and the first world war fought for dominance in Europe and the world.

Of particular interest to present day British Capitalism was the fate of Austria in face of the Prussian rise to leading place in Germany. At the outset Prussia and Austria were more or less equal rivals in the struggle for control of Germany and the Prussian Government realised that the advance of Prussia called for the expulsion and weakening of Austria. The rulers of Austria were less farseeing and ruthless than their Prussian rivals and only woke up to the realities of the situation when the battle had already been fought and won by Prussia. Now the struggle is for dominance in a United Europe and British Capitalism hesitates in its dilemma whether to see Germany take the lead in Europe or to get inside in the hope of preventing this: but British Capitalism has Colonial and other ties that pull in an opposite direction and make the decision a hard one.

Socialists have no illusions

For many years sentimentalists who refuse to recognise the nature of Capitalism have looked to United Europe as an ideal or at least as a step towards a warless, united world. It will, of course, be nothing of the kind. United Europe, if it comes to maturity, will be an attempt to form an industrial and military entity powerful enough to stand up to America and Russia.

Socialists can also recall with amusement an argument that used to be flung at them. While British Capitalists and the Empire were at the zenith of their power it was a common Tory argument against Socialists that they rejected British Nationalism, prided themselves on being international, and made use of the works of a foreigner a German, Karl Marx. This is a chicken that has come home to roost for now Tories and Labourites alike, have to admit that survival in a Capitalist world is no longer a matter that can be determined by the people and Government in this tight little island. But whereas they both now look for salvation to a European grouping on a Capitalist basis, Socialists are still internationalist because Socialism as always is a world conception and not a mere European one.

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Continued from page 39)

members of the working class, and if they don't come up to the required standard they get the sack—pardon us Mr. Amis—are asked to resign! Teachers, civil servants, etc., have "no interests to defend" and yet, like other members of the working class, they strike, or threaten to strike, for higher pay or better conditions, or to resist a worsening of conditions, even the G.P.'s are in that position at the moment.

Here are some specimens of the political outlook of Mr. Amis:

"Marxism, however, has a second attraction not offered by the Church: It involves violence." (Page 6.)

There is no evidence offered for this nonsensical view. In his ignorance Mr. Amis apparently blindly accepts Russian Communism as Marxist without investigation.

"One feels that a progressive party should have this reform [reform of the laws relating to homosexuality] on its programme." (Page 10.)

This gives an idea of the kind of question that looms large in Mr. Amis's intellectual mind.

"Until very recently there has been only one political issue of anything like the same proportions and of the same kind as the Abyssinians and the Spains of the Thirties: I mean, of course, Cyprus. There, at any rate, is something which potentially unites the romantic with the practical man. But what gets done about it? Compare what does get done about it with what would have got done about it in the Thirties." (Page 11.)

We have compared, and, in both cases found the answer to be—nothing that fundamentally matters! Of course there has been an issue of political importance, both then and now, that reduces the ones he mentions to insignificance, but Mr. Amis hasn't seen it. That issue is the ownership of the means of production by a privileged section of society which compels the mass of society to occupy a subject position beset by insecurity and want of the means to live a comfortable care-free life.

Here is a specimen of his idea of what moves some of his fellow intellectuals to action:

"Violence has a good deal of charm for some sections of the intelligentsia (as the cult of bullfighting shows) or, at any rate, the thought of violence is attractive. It provides a way of getting one's own back by proxy on one's parents and one's old headmaster; one can work off the guilt of

ODDS AND ENDS

What They Said

Looking through old pamphlets and journals can be quite an interesting pastime. For example, the Communist Review for April, 1953, wherein Harry Pollitt refers to "Comrade Beria," Andrew Rothstein writes of Beria as "Stalin's old comrade-in-arms" and John Eaton tells us that Stalin "... through a period of three decades showed himself to be the greatest economist of our times," and that he was "... the most profound, most creative thinker of our time in the science of political economy ..." etc.

Unfortunately, for the Communist Party, it now appears that Stalin was a terrorist who murdered Russian Army officers, and who "made serious mistakes in connection with agricultural policy ..." (Harry Pollitt, Daily Worker, 24/3/56). And Beria turned out to be an agent of British Imperialism after all! All this must be very hard even for Communists to swallow. But, then, if one puts faith in leaders what can one expect?

The Socialist—who knows what he wants, and how

having been to a public school, and so on, by chatting about blowing up the class one was born into; one can compensate with some dash for one's thwarted desire for power, which is often obversive in these circles. Quite soon it becomes natural to write airily about political murders and read about them with appreciation." (Page 6.)

We presume that Mr. Amis knows what he is talking about as he is referring to members of a group to which he keeps insisting he belongs. However, if the idea were not so absurd, and if we were not convinced he was romancing, we would be inclined to ask: "What kind of lunatics are these who masquerade as intellectuals?"

Now let us give a final quotation:

"I may have shown a certain animus towards Orwell, and I have not had occasion to do more than mention some of his many fine qualities. But animus remains, and the reason for it is this. He was the man above all others who was qualified to become the candid friend the Labour Party needed so much in the years after 1945. But what he did was to become a right wing propagandist by negation, or, at any rate, a supremely powerful—though unconscious—advocate of political quietism." (Page 8.)

This seems to sum up the real reason for writing the pamphlet—to express his spleen against those of his fellow "intellectuals," like Orwell, Auden, Koestler, Spender, and Day Lewis, whom he felt had let him down. On the other hand, of course, it may have been to "work off the guilt of having been to a public school!"

For the rest Mr. Amis's pamphlet has no value as a contribution to clearing the vision on the cause of social subjection and its removal. He evidently has no glimmering of the answers. What he has done is taken the opportunity to jibe at those of his fellow "intellectuals" who have deserted the Labour Party, make the usual clever remarks of this kind, and, with his tongue in his cheek, lump himself in with his impotent fellows. He displays the usual impudence of his fellows in straying into a field of which he is ignorant and giving his patronising opinions. If he had looked at facts instead of stratifying groups he might have got somewhere.

There is something about Left and Right wings in the pamphlet. Mr. Amis should take to his wings, fly out of discussions that are out of his depth, and get back to "best sellers."

GILMAC.

to get it—needs no leaders to think for him: he thinks for himself. There can be no Stalins, Berias—or Khrushchevs in the Socialist movement.

Communist Party Opposes Strikes

It is believed by many that the Communists always advocate and support strikes; that the Communist Party consistently support the workers in their struggles for higher wages and better working conditions. But this is not so. During the last war (after Germany attacked Russia) the Communists opposed all attempts by workers to improve their wages or conditions.

In a pamphlet by W. Wainwright entitled Clear Out Hitler's Agents, published by the Communist Party, he writes:—

"Again they [left wing opponents of the Communist Party] use the trick of waving a red flag. They talk about the boss' profit. They try to take the heart out of the work. 'Why slave when you are only piling up money for the boss?' they say.

"They want you to go slow, not to give your best work,

to be misled by their talk of strikes and the boss' profits into sabotaging our troops and the Red Army." (Page 9.)

And in March, 1944, the South Wales miners came out on strike. Although the Communist paper, *The Daily Worker* admitted that the miners "have a powerful case" it told them to "go back to work." (11/3/44).

The Communist Party is not a working-class party, it is, in fact, a not very successful mouthpiece for the Soviet Government in this country.

Has Socialism Failed?

In the 1951 General Election the Conservative candidate in North Battersea was one Ian Percival, and in his *Election News* he wrote:—

"Britain has tried Socialism, and it has failed. At home it has meant shortages, rising prices, high taxation, and one financial crisis after another. Abroad it has meant a lowering of our prestige, and therefore a weakening of our influences for peace."

Of course, Socialism has not failed. It has not been tried. During the period that Mr. Percival writes of Britain was ruled by a *Labour* Government—and the system was a *Capitalist* one; not Socialist. It is Capitalism that has failed—failed to solve the problems of war, poverty and crises. And it is only *Socialism* that can solve these problems. Labour Government has nothing in common with Socialism.

Wives or Automobiles—or Both

Middle East potentates used to collect scores of wives for their harems—some still do; but it appears that civilization (and oil companies) are coming to the desert. King Saud of Saudi-Arabia has ordered more than 60 Cadillac cars. The King's order will only cost a mere £357,140 or so. Some of the cars will be fitted with jewelled cigarette-lighters. Some will be air-conditioned; some will have one-way window glass, so that the passengers can see without being seen. And others have armour-plate and special machine gun mountings. . . .

Who says that kings are not useful to the community? Do they not provide work for automobile workers? And are not 60 cars more useful to a King than 60 wives—or are they?

Crises, Catastrophe and Mr. Strachey

DID Marx really believe that crises would be so catastrophic in their effects as to ensure the economic collapse of Capitalism? It is a convention of many of his critics and the so-called Marxist revisionists to say he did. None of them have ever given substance to their assertions with any worth while evidence.

It is true that the young Marx in *Wage Labour and Capital* (p. 45), spoke of "crises becoming more frequent and violent." And again in the *Communist Manifesto* (p. 18), we are told—"Crises by their periodical return put the existence of bourgeois society on its trial and each time more threateningly." But it is to Marx's detailed and mature economic investigation to which we must turn in order to estimate what he thought was the nature and role of Capitalist crises. And here we find no specific reference or concrete indication of a view that some mounting crescendo of crises will ultimately crash to economic ruin.

Rock, Everybody, Rock

At the time of writing Bill Haley and his Comets have arrived triumphantly in Britain; his latest film, "Don't Knock the Rock," is being shown on the circuits and the Rock 'n' Roll craze seems to be at its zenith. Scores of Bill Haley Concerts are being held up and down the country; and some newspapers, particularly the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Sketch*, are giving more space to Bill Haley than to Prince Charles, Princess Grace or Jayne Mansfield's vital statistics—for the time being.

Still, it's all good fun. The "cats" are happy; the newspapers are happy with their new gimmick; and Bill Haley and his backers and agents should be happy "coining the loot." For is not Rock 'n' Roll the greatest money-maker that "Pop" music has produced in a couple of decades?

So while it lasts . . . Rock, everybody, rock!!

God's Own Country!

"*Baby Doll*: Elia Kazan film, based on a typical Tennessee Williams play about sex, seen against a brutal background of an illiterate, run-down colour-conscious community in the Southern United States. The characters are mostly brutal, ignorant and animal and the story is about a mentally arrested girl, her repressed husband and the Sicilian who seduces her for revenge."—(*What's On in London*, 25/1/57.)

"PEN."

In point of fact, Marx never formulated a theory of crises, at least not in any systematic or cohesive form. Instead we get a treatment of the different aspects of crises, scattered through the 2nd and 3rd volumes of *Capital* and *Theories of Surplus Value*. So far from Marx laying down any hard and fast rules on the subject of crises, we get instead an analysis of a number of tendencies which are bound up with the production of crisis situations.

It seems fairly safe to assume then that Marx in his later and mature investigation of the actual trends in Capitalism, never regarded crises as the agent of the final destruction of extant society. On the contrary there is no little evidence to indicate that he saw crises as a normal but essential phase of the trade cycle which, he said, was peculiar to the Capitalist mode of production.

Indeed it was no other than Marx who pioneered the investigation into the nature of the antithetical yet



mutually reciprocal trade cycle. It was Marx who showed one phase of the trade cycle is characterised by an acceleration of capital investment and as a corollary to this an increased tempo of industrial activity, rising employment, rising wages and increasing profits.

Because the different branches of industry are atomistically controlled or to state it alternatively because "anarchy of production," prevails in Capitalism, decisions for capital investment are carried out by Capitalists without knowledge or regard for investment decisions being made at the same time by other Capitalists elsewhere.

As a result of these autonomous and unrelated decisions to invest in a period of expansion, it is hardly surprising that over-expansion of a particular line of industry takes place or what comes to the same thing disproportionality of industrial development between the various branches of production. Thus one industrial sphere may have over-expanded relatively to other spheres and as a result it will be unable to sell its goods at a remunerative price. Consequently there will be in this particular sphere a contraction of investment and hence production. This action will have cumulative effects by leading to a reduction of demand of products and services of those industries which are linked with this particular industrial branch and which in turn will reduce their orders to other concerns likewise linked with them. If the initial over-expansion or disproportionality of industrial development is big enough a general fall in the demand for goods and services will spread from point to point and a general relative over-production will ensue.

Thus the phase of the business cycle associated with accelerating investment, rising wages, rising employment and increasing profits, will come to an end and be replaced by the antithetical phase of reduced investment, falling employment and declining wages and profits.

The orthodox economists also treat of what is termed in modern economic usage the business cycle theory. For them a period of brisk trade activity is linked with a high return on invested capital. While the antithetical phase i.e. a recession, is associated with a decline in the rate of profit below the normal range for investment purposes. Thus for them crises are analysed from the formal level of the supply and demand of investment funds. Marx, however, probed deeper and showed that the behaviour of the Capitalist class springs from the basic features of Capitalist society which constitute a particular set of antagonistic class relations of production and gives rise to an antagonistic form of income distribution. From the general standpoint of the Capitalist class a "recession" is the outcome of an unfavourable distribution of income in that the form of income going to the working class as wages, is too high and that part of income going to them as profits is too low, to make it worth their while to maintain a high level of investment.

If Capitalism could operate on some master plan then the correct proportional expansion between the different branches of industry might be attempted and investment decisions synchronised in respect of the entire economy. But Capitalism does not work like that. Each Capitalist or group of Capitalists produce for a market of whose size they have only an imperfect knowledge, let alone the entire network of markets operating in Capitalism. Hence whether too little or too much is produced cannot be known until after the event and it is only a major upset in the price mechanism which reveals that a

number of unrelated and separate investment decisions have brought about a rupture of equilibrium conditions.

Crises are not as some theorists of under-consumption imagine the outcome of expanded production, outstripping total consumption demand, and so bringing about some permanent market decline.

It was never Marx's view that crises arise as the result of a chronic bias towards over-production and an ever-increasing inability of the Capitalists to dispose of their products in a perpetually shrinking market. In *Capital*, Vol. 3 (p. 299), Marx, commenting on "the upward swing of the trade cycle ends thus: "And in this way the cycle would run once more. One portion of capital which had been depreciated by the stagnation of its function would recover its old value. For the rest the same vicious cycle would be described once more in an expanded market and with increased productive forces."

From what has been said it is evident that Marx never viewed crises as an ineluctable agent for the ultimate destruction of existing society but as an antithetical but inseparable phase of the trade cycle.

In the light of the foregoing it would seem that periods of prosperity for the Capitalists i.e., periods of accelerating capital investment bring nemesis in the way of rising wages, rising costs, etc., which sooner or later tend to appreciably diminish profit margins. Crises would then seem the specific remedy for the evils arising from "prosperity." Stated from the more fundamental standpoint of Marx's analysis these evils are, "a production of too many means of production and necessities of life to serve as a means of exploitation of the labourer at a certain rate of profit."

Nevertheless if crises can be looked upon from one point of view as a retribution for prosperity they can also be regarded as acting as a purgative to the body economic, allowing it to be restored to the healthier state of equilibrium. To put the matter specifically, crises contain the germ of a trade recovery. In the first place the existence of a large industrial reserve army will serve to cheapen the price of labour-power and so raise the rate of profit and because of the cheapness of labour-power, tend to retard the introduction of machinery and new methods and so make possible the more primitive technical concerns to become profitable once more. At the same time the sharp depreciation of capital values will lower the organic composition of capital, i.e. lower the ratio of constant capital (means of production) to variable capital (wage payments) and so assist in raising the rate of profit. Again during a crisis there are cheap and abundant resources available, including large reserves of labour-power. Thus the conditions are prepared in a shorter or longer period, for a resumption of increased investment and rising profit margins.

Crises are not then incidental interludes between periods of high trade activity but an essential corrective for the uninhibited self-expansion of capital. As Marx states it: "Periodically the conflict of antagonistic agencies seek vent in crises. The crises are always but momentary and forcible solutions of the existing contradictions, violent eruptions which restore the disturbed equilibrium for a while." (*Capital*, Vol. 3, p. 292).

To say then that Marx tied up his views on crises with an automatic breakdown theory is either to misunderstand or misrepresent him. While it is true that crises subject Capitalism to stresses and strains, to suggest that they will bring about the social and physical collapse

of the system is something quite different. Marx so far as the present writer is aware never used the term "economic collapse of Capitalism."

For Marx, however, crises were a significant part of the dynamics of Capitalism and he regarded his own treatment of them as an important contribution to the understanding of the system. He saw them as not only an outcome of antagonistic agencies but as a means of resolving the conflict in a new equilibrium. The crisis plays then a definite role in influencing the long term trends of the system.

Capitalism may thus be described as a system of unstable equilibrium. Which brings us to Mr. Strachey, who states in *Contemporary Capitalism* (p. 218) that "Marx regarded the instabilities of Capitalism as a secondary matter and did not expect them to prove fatal to the system." But in that case the economic collapse theory which Mr. Strachey accuses Marx of holding, cannot be explained from Marx's theory of the production cycle of Capitalism. Marx, says Mr. Strachey, formulated something different. Marx's view of economic collapse is deduced from Marx's contention, according to Mr. Strachey, that Capitalism undergoes a continuous process of mass under-consumption and thus an ever-increasing inability of Capitalists to dispose of their products in an ever-decreasing market. Intense mass poverty would result, the workers would revolt and Capitalism would perish.

We are asked to believe, minus any evidence, that Marx gave up his formulation of the trade cycle concept and substituted a view of permanent stagnation, i.e. of falling wages profits and investment, and ever increasing massive unemployment. Thus the system would run down like a clock. Crises would no longer play an active part; no new equilibrium could be established; capital accumulation would go on contracting and the basic feature of Capitalism, the self-expansion of capital would atrophy. Both employers and workers would become ever poorer, even if at different levels. Mr. Strachey

consistent in his confusion, would have us believe nevertheless that Marx thought that in all this process the Capitalists would in some way grow ever richer.

Mr. Strachey, however, flatly contradicts himself in the same paragraph by stating that the instabilities of the system and Marx's alleged under-consumption views of crises are in some way clearly related. He adds lamely, "but Marx never fully elucidated the connection between them." Marx did, of course, fully elucidate the connection between the instabilities of Capitalism and the emergence of crises. Mr. Strachey has never fully understood this connection, even though he wrote a book called *The Nature of Capitalist Crisis*. When Marx in the preface of *Capital* presupposed a reader willing to think for himself, he was perhaps a little optimistic. But a person who can state on one page that Marx regarded the instabilities of the system as secondary and then on the previous page aver that "Marx and Engels lived in the confident expectation that each crisis would be the system's last" i.e. fatal, is incorrigible.

Marx never constructed a catastrophic theory of crises. Nor did he say, as Mr. Strachey avers, that crises are due to the inability of the workers to buy back what they have produced. Although Mr. Strachey was posing as a Marxist, he put this view forward in the name of Marx. Nevertheless Marx repudiated Rodbertus' view that crises were caused by a lack of paying consumption and could be remedied by higher wages. Marx also showed that it was "high wages" which constituted a factor for producing a crisis and a plentiful supply of cheap labour-power as a factor for initiating a boom.

Mr. Strachey, however, is not really an economist. He is a politician trying to explain the errors and illusions of the past but in fact only explaining them away. It becomes necessary therefore to set up a lot of false assumptions and with great gusto, knock 'em down. Like most politicians, he has a favourite aunt called Sally. E. W.

BOOK REVIEW

"A History of Turkey" by M. Phillips Price, M.P.
(Published by George Allen and Unwin).

AN interesting book. A condensed version of the history of Turkey, from the early days of the Osmanli tribe, who started the Turkish Empire, to the present day Republic. This is not intended to be a profound work but for those requiring an introduction to the events which have taken place in Turkey since the early empire, this is the book. It is the sort of thing that has come to be associated with travelling journalists, M.P.'s, etc., well written, easily read and with enough facts to make it interesting. The bibliography published at the end of the chapter is extensive and should aid the interested student of Middle-Eastern affairs.

Turkey as a bulwark against Russian Imperialism

Despite its superficiality, the book brings out the importance of Turkey to the Western Powers as a bastion against the Imperialist designs of Russian Capitalism. For the contemporary Capitalist set-up in Russia is just as keen to get control of the Black Sea Straits (at Turkey's expense) for trade, strategic and other reasons, and to roll back the Russo-Turkish border, whenever and wherever possible, as was Czarist Russia.

Turkish Agriculture—Feudal Aspects

Turkey still has its Feudal aspects, despite its Capitalist visage. The "Metayer" or sharecropping system, still exists, although it is not the prevailing mode. The Metayer is "based on the principle that the annual crop is divided between landlord and cultivator." . . . (Page 184). Also dealt with is ownership of land in Anatolia, of "34½ million acres of cultivated land in Anatolia, 32 million acres are owned and worked by cultivators of an average of not more than 16 acres, two millions by persons with an average of 300 acres, and only half a million with an average of 400 acres." (Page 182).

Labour Conditions and the T.U. Movement

There is a brief chapter on Labour conditions and social legislation. Mr. Price points out the lack of a trade union movement in Turkey, until comparatively recent times. The Trade Unions, such as they were, were early suppressed, which was quite understandable in a semi-feudal economy. 1920 saw some serious attempts to get Trade Unions going. "The Kemalist Government of the National Revolution set itself the task of indus-

tralisng Turkey, and consequently became concerned with having a contented working class which would run these industries. . . ." (Page 197, our italics). But despite the needs of Turkish Capitalism it was not until 1947 that a law was passed legalising Trade Unions. The author says that Trade Unions are "not instruments of the State or of a Party dominating the State, as in Communist countries." . . . (Page 204), but one can fairly say (despite this statement that Trade Unions in Turkey as in Russia and many other countries are part of the State machine. The fact that the T.U. movement in Turkey was initiated by the Government, that strikes are illegal, and that Trade Unions have to get Government permission to join International organisations is more than proof of their subservance to the Turkish State. Referring to the matter of joining International organisations,

Price says: "The Turkish Trade Union leaders seem to see nothing very wrong in taking their lead from the Government in matters of this kind, and indeed to wait for Government initiative in such matters." (Page 202).

A free Trade Union movement to better the lot of the Turkish working class is something which has yet to be fought for; and then only in the light, that it is, at its best, reformist activity aimed at getting the best out of Capitalism for Turkish workers, and that it will not alter the basis of Capitalist society.

Only Socialist understanding can solve the problems of all workers, and this is something that the Turkish working class must aim at acquiring.

JON KEYS.

HOMES AND HOVELS

Our Mansion and Hovel World

In passing, the following quotations have some bearing on the subject:—

"In a society in which there is war and its consequences the conditions do not exist for active life mellowing into old age. In cities built haphazardly, the mansion and the slum are corollaries. Where the horror of street upon street of back-to-back hovels is tolerated, there is unlikely to be any appreciation of the need for parks and open fields. As long as the individual worker is the most cheaply replaced component of industrial stock, his welfare is not likely to be the first consideration in production: factories will continue to be built and mines sunk to satisfy other reasons than the dictates of life and health. The production of goods and food geared to any other motive than their consumption by the producers must lead to the insanity of food being burnt and production restricted when there is widespread malnutrition and want with all their consequences on health. Morbidity and mortality directly arising from poverty and social mismanagement in a society that has technologically solved the needs of production, present to medicine not a problem, but an outrage." (Arnold Sorsby's "Medicine and Mankind." (Our italics.))

The illusion that the vast mass of the working class can somehow "hoist" themselves out of their poverty and degradation by such means as "home buying" on a mortgage system is a popular fantasy held by those who fail to comprehend the underlying cause of slums and poverty which is that the working class have to sell their labour-power on the market.

The Snare of Home Ownership

Whilst on the subject of home ownership—Lewis Mumford, in his work, *Culture of Cities* has this to say—

"The failure of decent housing to obtain capital through competition in the market has led to widespread attempts to foster home-ownerships among the workers: under the guise of offering security, those who have fostered this movement, including Government agencies, have sought to burden the worker with the risks: risks whose returns are not sufficient to attract the necessary capital from the more wary. This diversion of the worker's meagre budget to housing not merely undermines his standard of life: it lessens his freedom of movement and, during a financial crisis or a local shut-down often results in the complete loss of his entire investment—and the roof over his head as well." (Our italics.)

The problem facing the world wide working class is one of poverty caused through wage slavery—the solution lies in abolishing the wages system and establishing Socialism. So long as these facts are ignored by the majority we shall continue to read in the Daily Press the empty speeches of the defenders of King Capital, whether well meaning or hypocritical.

G. R. RUSSELL.

THE National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children may be an admirable institution in the eyes of those who fail to realize its limitations: namely, that it is powerless to prevent the poverty stricken unhappy home conditions arising from a social system whose "main-spring" is profit, and where the amount of rent paid determines the quality and quantity of the shelter that is sold. Pay eight guineas a week and you can live in comfort; pay eight shillings a week and you can live in misery.

There's the rub—the quantity of wages determines the quality of shelter and there is no escape from this state of affairs, so long as shelter and the workers' labour power both exist as commodities.

Slums always with us

Without tiresome reminders of the slums that are still with us, despite their "abolition" on paper over the years by Governments of the day, surely it must be obvious that if Capitalism produces them, through the inability of its wage slaves to afford decent homes, the only solution is to abolish the wages system, which is the real stumbling block to the so-called housing problem. Despite the foregoing, we constantly read statements, such as the following, culled from the *Liverpool Echo* of 30th November:—

"Lady Celia Noble, wife of Sir Humphrey Noble, High Sheriff of Northumberland and mother of two sons and a daughter, told the annual meeting of Blackpool branch of the N.S.P.C., yesterday that a happy home life was the surest way of preventing misery and delinquency in children.

"The child who is secure and has affection is not the child who goes into the juvenile court," she said." (Our italics.)

This statement is illuminating merely because of what it does not tell us, namely, about the child who is not "secure" and whose quota of comfort and affection is on a diminishing ratio in relation to the degree of misery and degradation of the particular slum environment he or she inhabits.

Can Lady Noble, who has been fortunate enough to bestow on her offspring the degree of comfort in her home which she deems necessary to prevent the misery she mentions, inform us how to provide all children with similar desirable home conditions in a class divided, buying and selling world? Socialists continually point out that the abolition of the wages system is the only possible solution for the miseries which spring from production for profit.

"THE MISSING MILLIONS"

Where are the Missing Millions? This is the great lament of all the sports columns of the daily newspapers. They take sympathetic view on behalf of the monied people interested in the prosperity of Football Clubs, Boxing Promotions and Race Meetings, big and small throughout the country for this falling-off of attendances doubtless affects their profits. Especially in football, where since the end of the war they have been experiencing yearly record-breaking profits. But now no more of those "fabulous gates," no more of those "astounding transfer fees." Of course they are not alone. The Churches of this country for so many, many years now, have been faced with the self-same grim decline. Try as they may, with their Missions here, Missions there, Missions everywhere; they simply cannot win back the deserters.

The Cinemas and Music Halls would appear to have contracted this illness as well. Fewer long queues or "full-house" signs to be seen these days. And the theatre, ballet and opera, have their black spots and dull moments.

Not only are entertainments affected, but more serious interests. Trade Union meetings, lectures of all sorts, and political meetings, do not seem to arouse any concern in the people at all. Communists, Conservatives, Labour and Liberal alike, they find it harder to hold successful meetings today, except when a big crisis turns up.

We all know that partly to blame is that bugbear Television. Fagged-out after another day's wearisome toil and an equally tiring journey home, no doubt it is more than a temptation to slump into the nearest chair after some food and remain there glued for the rest of the evening, reading, listening, talking, viewing or more likely . . . dozing.

Hark then! this question of the "Missing Millions." Is it because of Television? Or, lack of spare cash to spend on entertainment? Or the time and trouble in rushing home, swallowing a meal, racing about preparing yourself, etc., etc., and then eventually getting out in time

to enjoy those amusements, interests, hobbies, studies, or duties?

Socialists would say that it is all of these, combined with a host of other difficulties. Mind you! it could also be a yearning to participate in new and fresh ventures so different from those of the pub . . . the pictures . . . or the dancing. But, alas! it isn't to be. This brings the everyday ritual into the scene, you know, how much? Can we afford it? Can we spare the time? Must we rise early next morning, or can we lie in.

But there positively is something you can and should make time for, something really well worth the effort; something you ought to start helping to bring about, something we all need badly and this is the "System of society called Socialism."

Under Socialism all would be doing a useful job and not just clipping tickets on buses and in the underground, or wasting away in Armies, Navies, Air and Police forces.

Thousands of clerks who just fill in forms and fuss about with little rubber stamps in Labour Exchanges, Town Halls, Ministry of this, that, or the other. Doing much the same in banks, insurance offices and building societies. Yes! these useless stupid jobs! ! !

Just look, what can be produced these days even with all this waste of manpower and materials. With the complete abolition of all this pitiful junk like, guns, battle-ships, warplanes, bombs, military uniforms, barracks and the rest. . . .

Just stop and try to imagine what could be done and enjoyed by every man, woman, and child, if all the able bodied were doing something truly vital. To serve their own and everyone else's needs for the wealth would be the common property of the whole of society, for the free use of all.

Then for the first time there would most certainly be the real prospect of having plenty of free time to do all you desire—with all amenities accessible to all the whole world over. J.M.

HOW TO STUDY SOCIALISM

READERS of the SOCIALIST STANDARD and listeners at our meetings will have realised that we attach great importance to the workers having a knowledge of certain basic principles and being able to apply them to the questions of the day. That is how Socialists are made, and it is the only way. The worker who wishes to save himself from taking in and acting upon the theories and policies of the various Capitalist parties must himself get to understand the economic and political problems which face him. This requires a certain amount of study, but it is well within the reach of the average worker. It is less difficult than many of the technical studies which workers have to pursue in order to get and keep their jobs in the employers' factories, workshops and offices. The study of economics and politics from the working class viewpoint is not only interesting in itself—something which can be said of all systematic expansion of our knowledge of the world we live in—but it has the additional attraction that it touches at every point the actual conditions of the life of the working

class. That is to say, it is a study which, so far from being divorced from action, leads directly to the adoption of policies in line with our own economic interests. Knowledge of Socialism colours the everyday thoughts and actions of the Socialist, enables him to understand and appreciate at their true value the social forces with which he has to deal, and gives him that confidence which is indispensable for the organisation of the working class, the conquest of the powers of government, and the building up of Socialism.

How is such a study to be undertaken? What books should be read, and how are the students' difficulties to be dealt with? These questions are in the minds of all who approach the task for the first time. To the limit of our present resources we hold meetings, and arrange study classes and discussions at Head Office and in the branches. The student should attend these meetings and classes.

He should read the books advertised in these columns. They are works which we can recommend, and we shall

be pleased to advise as to the works which a beginner should tackle first.

But above all there is THE SOCIALIST STANDARD itself. From month to month over a period of 26 years, Socialist principles have been applied to current problems, every aspect of Capitalism has been examined and explained, every policy presented to the workers has been criticised and its value assessed, every anti-working-class party has been exposed. Hundreds of well-informed articles have made accessible useful knowledge from almost every field of study, and hundreds of students' difficulties have been answered.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD is not like a "news" journal, out of date almost as soon as it is published. It is a record of the past history of working-class movements, packed with invaluable information on their failures and on the false theories and policies which made failure inevitable. It is no exaggeration to say that there is no other comparable source to which the worker with his limited leisure and means can go for reliable guidance in the study of social problems. It is to meet this need that we offer bound volumes for sale. They are well bound and are sold at a price which leaves only a small margin over the actual cost of binding and postage. We cannot too strongly urge members and sympathisers to order one or more volumes and get down to study during the winter months.

(Reprinted from S.S. December, 1930)

FULHAM AND CHELSEA BRANCH LECTURES

At 34, St. Georges Square, S.W.1
at 8 p.m. on Thursday evenings.

April 4th.

"KLINEBERG'S SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY"

—Fred Warlow

April 18th.

"A SOCIALIST SHOP STEWARD IN THE E.T.U."

—Jim Garnham

All welcome

Discussion

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park	...	11.15 a.m.—2 p.m.
		3.30—6 p.m.
East Street (Walworth)	...	March 3rd 12.30 p.m.
	"	10th 11 a.m.
	"	17th 12.30 p.m.
	"	24th 11 a.m.
	"	31st 12.30 p.m.
Whitstone Pond (Hampstead)	...	11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park	...	11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Lincoln's Inn Fields	...	Tuesdays & Fridays
Finsbury Pavement	...	Tuesdays
Tower Hill	...	Thursdays at 1 p.m.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS at HEAD OFFICE

Documentary Films followed by brief Socialist comments at H.Q.

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, S.W.4.

(near Clapham North Tube Station)

Every Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting is then open for questions and discussion which can be continued in the Social Room afterwards when light refreshments will be on sale. Visitors particularly welcome.

March 3rd "Mass Production"—J. Haynes

" 10th "Health and Wealth"—J. Leech

" 17th "The Drama of Christ"—H. Jarvis

" 23rd "Raising the Standard"—R. Ambridge

" 30th "Debate—Socialism and Religion"

April 7th "Does it Matter What You Think?"—

Gilmac

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol. 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Bennie Road, Dundee.

EDINBURGH. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh
OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

Copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD are on sale at the newspaper stands as named below. Members and sympathisers are asked to buy from these stands when possible:—

"THE BLACKSTOCK": Finsbury Park. (Sunday morning).

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GLASGOW (KELVINGROVE) BRANCH

PUBLIC MEETING

ST. ANDREWS HALLS

"THE RENT BILL"

Speaker J. Richmond

Sunday, March 17th at 7.30 p.m.

Doors open 7 p.m. (Enter by G Door Berkley St.)

BETHNAL GREEN MEETING

"YOU, THE RENT BILL AND SOCIALISM"

Speakers:

E. Wilmott A. Ivimey

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Friday, 22nd March, 1957, at 7.45 p.m.

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All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. March 7th and 21st.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Boxley, Kent.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCELES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o. H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (March 6th and 20th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, March 4th and 18th at 8 p.m. at 76, Dumbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney. Sec.: A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to G. Steed, 38, Lichfield Road, N.W.2. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. (March 13th, and 27th) at Vienna Restaurant, 289, Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.3.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 11, Oakfield Road, N.4.

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LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

MANCHESTER Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, March 12th and 26th, George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec.: J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. Phone: DIDSbury 5709.

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S.W. LONDON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Correspondence: Secretary, c/o. Head Office.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisley, 17, Cotswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

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WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsey, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

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April 10th (Title to be announced)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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War on the Wage Front

Is the Time Opportune?

ALONG WITH THE SHIPBUILDING WORKERS who came out on strike on 16 March, millions of workers in the engineering, building, railway and other industries have claims awaiting settlement. The newspapers and politicians urge the workers to be moderate and to submit their case to arbitration and they profess to be shocked that a trade union official, Mr. Hill of the Boilermakers, should say "No arbitration. We are going to fight," and that Sir William Grant, chairman of the Engineering and Allied Employers, West of England Association, should declare:— "This time we do not want government interference. That is quite positive. We want to fight it out ourselves. We have got to stand firm and prove to these fellows that things are not done so easily." (*Daily Mail*, 13, March, 1957.)

In the same quarters tears are shed because there should be a hold-up of industry "just now," the idea being that strikes are all very well in the past or in the future but not (as the *Daily Mail* puts it) "just as Britain is coming out of the Suez squeeze and the gold reserves are climbing up again." This is humbug and is a line of argument that should be totally ignored by workers considering strike action. If at any time conditions are relatively favourable for workers to strike be sure the Government and the employers and the Press will find reasons why it should not take place then. But workers with long memories will recall the many times past when they have been lulled into delaying action while the employers prepared for battle. It happened in 1922 with the engineers in a dispute over an overtime agreement. Negotiations broke down in April, 1921, but the employers waited seven months before they delivered their ultimatum that led eventually to a weeks long lock-out—they were waiting for the heavy unemployment to undermine the resistance of the workers and to deplete the funds of the Unions through payment of unemployment benefit.

Are the Employers Bluffing?

The present engineering dispute is being fought against a background that is very different from the lock-out of 1922, and the difference is not that, because of the so-called "Welfare State," the wages war has changed its nature or that arbitration has made strikes unnecessary. The difference lies in the state of industry and of unemployment, the factors that workers do need to study closely. Strikes are not won by bull-headed bravery; the employers, with the Government behind them, if they regard an issue as vital, cannot be starved into submission, and in a long-drawn-out battle of that kind are bound to win. But if

trade is good and employers do not want to have profitable production interfered with their first blunt refusal to make an offer will prove to be bluff. That may well be the situation now and short sharp strike actions may be successful. A few months ago with motor car and ancillary plants on short time many employers may have contemplated a show-down over wage claims but with the motor trade recovering and engineering and shipbuilding profits and exports on a high level it is more likely that employers generally will be prepared to pay a wage-increase rather than have plant shut down and contracts interrupted.

The *Daily Mail* in a leading article (13/3/57) has admitted that "there is little question that the shipbuilders could afford higher wages . . ." They were doubtful about some engineering firms but it is rather surprising that they should have gone so far as this.

The Labour Party and Strikes

Labour spokesmen have attacked the Tory Government for their handling of wage disputes and in particular have blamed the Government for allowing the cost of living to rise. But no one should be deceived into thinking that things were any different when the Labour Government was in power. In 1948 there was also an engineering wage claim, which likewise the employers turned down. The engineers then too threatened strike action and their case was based on the rise of the cost of living and the general inadequacy of pay. But far from the Labour Government giving them encouragement, this was the time of the "wage-freeze" policy and the workers were being told that they should not ask for more pay although prices were rising.

But the engineering workers persisted and their threat to strike brought results, for a court of inquiry specially appointed by the government recommended a wage increase, though it did so with the explanation that it was only because of "particular circumstances" in the engineering claim and was not to be a precedent for other workers and so upset the Labour Government's "wage freeze" policy. It did in fact open the way for other workers to claim.

Don't worry about the Germans and the Japs

The workers who demand more pay and threaten to strike are being told, as they always are on such occasions, that British export prices will be pushed up and foreign manufacturers will capture all the markets. The obvious working class reaction to this factor ought always to be that of strengthening international trade union organisation so that workers in all countries can act together on wage claims. This time some sort of all-round movement is in being for wages are rising fairly generally in Europe, U.S.A. and elsewhere. In Germany it is the engineering and shipbuilding workers who are leading the way and Japanese workers also are striking:—

"In Germany, organised labour is growing steadily more militant. Its appetite has been whetted by the success of the 16 week strike of engineering and shipyard workers over sickness payments and annual holidays, and similar claims are expected from other branches of the Metal Workers Union. In Japan, this year's labour troubles look like being worse than last year's. . ." (*Financial Times* 14/3/57).

Nonsense about Nationalisation

Some engineering and building workers are deceiving themselves with the notion that the long-term way out of their wages difficulties and the threat of short-time

or unemployment when sales fall off, is to press for nationalisation of their industries. They should think again and drop this nonsense. Nationalisation has solved no problem for the working class and they have before their eyes a striking example in the railways. The railwaymen are among the worst paid industries. They have just rejected a miserly offer of a three per cent. increase and appealed to arbitration for more. And at that arbitration on 26 February of this year the spokesman of the Transport Commission, opposing the claim, gave the same reason as does every group of employers, "the duty" of the Commission to resist the claim on the ground of their financial difficulties, the fact that they are making a loss instead of a profit (*Daily Telegraph*, 27 February, 1957).

Nationalisation is not deserving of working class support and to raise the issue in relation to a wage claim is worse than useless.

But that is not to say that workers should go on year after year imagining that there is no other way except to strike for higher pay when trade is good and go down fighting when trade is bad. The way is open whenever a socialist working class wants to use it. It is to take democratic political action to get rid of capitalism and establish socialism in its place. Then there will be the certainty, through the ending of the destruction and waste of capitalism, of bringing about a vast increase in the production of useful things and no propertied class to stand in the way of that so much promised and never arriving "higher standard of living."

The suicidal action of the workers every few years at general elections is of far greater and more lasting importance than the strikes for higher wages that occur in between. At elections the working class places in power the Tory or Labour politicians who use their office to keep in being the social system which makes the workers a propertyless class producing wealth and profits for the capitalist minority. Given this situation, with the government in the background safeguarding the position of the propertied class, the industrial struggle over wages and conditions of work can go its up and down way indefinitely without ever settling anything. Socialism is the only way to end it and open up a new horizon for society. H.

ARE YOU A MEMBER?

Socialism is worth all the effort that can be put in to achieve it. Progress towards Socialism depends largely upon the number of Socialists organised together to obtain it. The larger the number the more propaganda can be done and the quicker we will get there. On the inside of the back page of this issue you will find set out our object and Declaration of Principles. If you agree with them your place is in our ranks.

NEW PAMPHLET

A pamphlet *Socialist Comment*, is now on sale (40 pages, 6d., post free 8d.) It contains seven articles reprinted from issues of the SOCIALIST STANDARD during the past year or two. It deals with the colour problem in South Africa; why Socialists oppose the Labour Party; Housing; boom and slump; the ownership of property; and the workers' ideas about their pay.

HINTS ON CIVIL DEFENCE

WHAT are you doing about Civil Defence? Busy sealing your windows with sticky paper, learning how to bandage a cut finger, and how to dig grandma out of the rubble? If so, we've got news for you. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are ancient history—civil defence methods being taught today are likely to be as effective against future nuclear weapons as stone-age implements would be against tanks.

And what authority have we for taking this rather pessimistic view? None other than Mr. Val Peterson, who is the Federal Administrator of Civil Defence in the United States. His department was set up in 1951, and his conclusions are, therefore, by no means hasty speculation, but the outcome of six years' study of a subject vital to American government policy. According to an article by Mr. Alistair Cooke in the *Manchester Guardian* (20/2/57) "He (Mr. Peterson) has refused to admit that any plan of civilian defence no matter how grandiose in conception or how faithfully executed, can cope with the destructive power of modern weapons, any more than a teacup can bale out a sinking liner."

Tut! Tut! We trust that the appropriate authorities over here will give the lie to this defeatist philosophy, even though it comes from such an expert as Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson is pretty gloomy about the protective value of air-raid shelters, even if there will be enough of them left for us poor workers after the needs of service chiefs, cabinet ministers, captains of industry, etc., have been met. To quote Mr. Cooke again: "Mr. Peterson said that if the whole 170 million Americans had air-raid shelters, at least 50 per cent. of them would die in a surprise enemy attack." In the final analysis, he said: "There is no such thing as a nation being prepared for a thermo-nuclear war."

In an emergency Mr. Peterson's office would be responsible for dispersing the American government, evacuating the cities, and commandeering transport, utilities, and hospitals. But would we have any warning that an emergency existed before the first hydrogen missiles began to fall like the gentle dew from heaven?

However given three hours' notice Mr. Peterson thinks that about half the population of the inland cities in the United States could possibly be saved by totally evacuating them. But where could the population of the inland cities of Britain go? There just are not the wide open spaces here as in the U.S., and one or two strategically placed hydrogen bombs . . . but there, it does not do to be too morbid. Unfortunately, according to Mr. Peterson, the inhabitants of coastal cities in the U.S. would not fare so well as the inlanders because of unheralded atomic shellings by submarines suddenly popping up out of the sea: we will suppress any remarks about British seaside resorts in case the good mayors of Brighton and Margate blame us for any decreased attendance of holidaymakers this summer.

The interest in Soviet air power is misplaced, according to the *New York Herald-Tribune* (also quoted in Mr. Cooke's article), because long-range submarines could be used as launching platforms for nuclear missiles having ranges up to 5,000 miles; the great industrial centres deep in the heart of the U.S. "are within range of this potential



terror streaking out of the Atlantic, the Pacific, and the Gulf of Mexico." Submarines streaking out of the North Sea (long or short range) could deal very effectively with the closely concentrated industrial centres in Britain.

So it looks as though we must abandon the sticky paper those nice shiny tin helmets, etc., and take to the hills. But wait a minute, that awkward Mr. Peterson has objections to that idea as well. To quote Mr. Cooke: "Mr. Peterson thought that, even to rescue half the population, the United States would have to start at once plans for housing most of its city populations underground in the mountain ranges of the East and West. He piled on the misery by warning the committee that even such drastic plans foresaw only an attack by hydrogen weapons. Within a year or two, by 1966 at the latest, he was convinced that the inter-continental ballistic missile, with an atomic or hydrogen warhead, would be the prime weapon. When that was perfected, he said, the Government's recommended plans for exacuation would be 'out the window.'"

But the worst is yet to come! Mr. Cooke's stimulating (but rather gloomy article) ends by quoting the *New York Journal-American*, which has revealed that U.S. military scientists are working on an inter-continental missile with an "anti-matter" warhead that "would make the hydrogen bomb look like a fire cracker." According to Mr. Cooke "one gramme of 'anti-matter' could trigger a weapon as powerful as the Hiroshima bomb; and the expert guess is that a portable warhead could 'conceivably blow the Soviet Union off the map.'"

Our rulers tell us that we must have the latest (and therefore most devastating) nuclear weapons because they

are "deterrents" to potential aggressors; it is never Britain which is the potential aggressor, but always "the other side." Of course, the governments of the United States, Russia, France, Germany, etc., are busy telling their own workers the self same story. No government wants war, and yet all are preparing for it.

Socialists know that war is the final arbiter in the bitter struggle between rival capitalist groups. So long as capitalism remains, the threat of war with or without thermo nuclear weapons is ever present, casting a dark and dreadful shadow over the happiness and peace of mind of millions of human beings.

FURTHER REFLECTIONS ON CRISES

BECAUSE the pattern of a particular crisis is influenced by the concrete circumstances of the time no crisis is merely a repetition of those which have preceded it. While there are elements common to all crises we cannot say in advance how these elements will interact in a specific situation or what is the relative strength of other factors associated with it. Consequently to understand all the relevant details of a particular crisis, we can only be wise after the event.

Nevertheless we can say that all crises are intimately connected with two fundamental features of the system, viz., "anarchy of production" and "disproportional industrial development." These two features are again intimately bound up with each other.

By anarchy of production we do not infer economic chaos, on the contrary capitalism is a system ruled by laws and compulsions of its own. What is meant is that Capitalism is not a system consciously regulated by social aims. Capitalists do not meet beforehand to harmonise production in accordance with social ends. Capitalism being profit motivated production, capitalists invest in industry for no other motive and without regard for and little knowledge of other investments being carried out at the same time. But capitalist production is social production and the different branches of industry form an interlocking whole. It can be seen then that the different yet integrated industrial spheres, governed as they are by autonomous decisions being made simultaneously, there exists in the system an inherent bias towards uneven development between the various branches of industry. When this disproportionality reaches a certain level the possibility of a crisis emerges.

To put the matter concretely we can begin by saying that the market for any product is dependent on the volume of production in other spheres and therefore cannot be accurately gauged. Now if we assume that Capitalists in a particular industry have over-estimated the demands for their product and so produced more than the market can absorb at a remunerative price and if we take it that other industries have not similarly expanded, then it can be said that this particular industry has over-expanded relative to other industries, i.e. a disproportionality of industrial development has taken place.

This relative over-expansion of industry will, however, generate cumulative effects. Not only will the industry affected cut investment and hence production but in doing so it reduces its demands for commodities, including labour-power, to those industries linked to it.

The only effective civil defence measure would be the rapid growth of Socialist knowledge among the workers of the world, so that capitalism may be replaced by socialism, and international rivalry abolished.

One final hint: read our pamphlet *The Socialist Party and War* (price 1/-), which contains a detailed socialist analysis of the cause of wars: there is more practical advice and cause of optimism contained within its 100 pages than in all the mass of civil defence literature published by governments which at the same time are planning more efficient means of destruction.

M.L.



"Look, it says 'Bring your financial problems to us'!"

They in turn will cut their orders to other concerns and so on. As a result a widespread decline in production will occur.

If the initial over-expansion is big enough it may permeate the entire economy and precipitate a crisis. Large scale unemployment will appear, purchasing power suffer a sharp decline and surplus products will then begin to appear on the market as a matter of course.

It can be seen then that over-production in one branch of industry brings elements of over-production in other branches of industry, and by rupturing the conditions of equilibrium, initiates relative over-production, which is indistinguishable from general over-production. All crises then are crises of relative over-production. An industry can only over-expand in relation to other industries although the effect which this produces is, as has

been already stated, indistinguishable from general over-production.

Crises, as Marx pointed out, do not arise through a lack of paying consumption of the mass of the population. They arise because disproportional development in one industrial sector leads to a curtailment of investment (and so production) which by upsetting the balance of the different industrial branches brings about a general slowing down of production. It is this disproportional development which starts the downward spiral of wages and employment with its corollary of shrinking purchasing power. The lack of paying consumption is then a consequence not a cause of crises.

To elucidate the point further we might add that the effect of a boom is to generate rising levels of purchasing power, and further that wage payments seem to increase more rapidly in the latter stages of the boom than at the beginning. But rising wages tend to reduce profit margins. Further, when an over expansion of one industrial sphere has been big enough to start a downward spiral of investment, and profits, there comes into existence a volume of capital investment too great to be consistent with former profit levels. As Marx says, "Since production depends on investment [such a situation] constitutes an over-production of capital which takes the form of an over-production of commodities."

From the standpoint of the employers one of the prime factors for ending boom conditions is that wages are too high to make increasing investment desirable. Any return to a new stage of profitable investment depends then on labour-power becoming cheap enough to increase profit margins to the point which makes an expansion of production worthwhile.

A crisis is made possible in Capitalism not because the workers have too little purchasing power—in fact as already stated their purchasing power is at its height prior to the boom breaking—but because of the antagonistic class distribution of income inherent in a system of antagonistic class relations of production. Capitalists cut back investment because there is an unsatisfactory income distribution for them, in that profit margins are too small and wage levels too high. They are not concerned with some abstract purchasing power but in the concrete fact that the purchasing power in the form of wages is too high for the existing volume of capital to earn a given return.

To say, as under-consumptionists say, that crises are caused by too much of everything being produced is not in accordance with the facts. A crisis does not mean there is a total deficit of purchasing power unable to buy back an absolute over-production of consumers goods. The decline in purchasing power of the workers in a crisis situation is the outcome of an unfavourable distribution of income as the result of the system failing to expand proportionally and so bringing about elements of over-production in the various sectors of industry whose net effect is general over-production. It is this that originates a falling spiral of wages and employment and makes inevitable the appearance of market "surplus stock" in the shape of articles consumed by the working class. There is still, nevertheless, plenty of purchasing power in the pockets, holdings, banks, etc., of the Capitalists, to buy this surplus stock but of course they do not choose to spend their money that way.

Muddle-headed theorists have argued that crises could be assuaged and even cured, if at the first sign of

a slump, the Capitalists went in for increased personal consumption, buying more Rolls Royces presumably and having nightly champagne parties. But it is forgotten, or is not known by these theorists, that boom or slump, the accumulation of capital i.e. the self-expansion of capital is still the basic urge of the Capitalists. At least the Capitalists are realists who know that they must husband their resources and even increase them as far as conditions permit, if they are to successfully ride the crest of the next boom wave. Like the workers they tighten their belts even though the belts are larger and the stomach more capacious. In more theoretical language it can be said that the primary motive of Capitalists is the expansion of exchange value not the production of immediate articles of consumption.

Marx himself took the view that the system in relation to human needs does not produce too much but too little. He held it to be a system of organised scarcity. In Vol. 3 of "Capital" he states, "It is not a fact that too much wealth is produced. But it is a fact that there is periodical over-production in its capitalistic and contradictory form."

Which brings us to Mr. Strachey again. In the 1930's he wrote a much hailed book, "The Nature of Capitalist Crises." Nowhere in it did he provide any coherent account of crises. One could detect, however, the over-tones of an under-consumptionist view of crises. Thus on (p. 248) we are told "that the essence of every capitalist crisis is that the population is unable to purchase the evergrowing quantity of consumers commodities which come pouring on to the market." One page 289 he adds, "the under-consumptionists were not wrong in one sense but they were wrong in thinking that the payment of high wages was the solution to crises." All of which shows the confused nature of Mr. Strachey's thinking on the subject of crises.

What was more serious was his attempt to link what Marx termed the tendency of the law of the falling rate of profit to crises and to establish it as the crucial cause. It is true that Marx had listed a number of tendencies which worked in an opposite direction and Mr. Strachey dutifully enumerated them. But in "The Nature of Capitalist Crisis" he contended that "they can check but not overcome the main downward tendency of the rate of profit." P. 264.

This view that the tendency of the law of the falling rate of profit is the main agency for encompassing the downfall of capitalism can be briefly stated. It is held that the rate of profit falls in a continuous downward curve and finally reaches a point which provides no further impetus for capital accumulation, just as the steady drop in potential of a power source would reach a point where it could no longer supply a driving force to machinery.

Not only would the falling rate of profit as it reached a new low level precipitate a crisis but as a result each crisis would become more catastrophic. Bound up with this view is the belief of some ultimate breakdown of the system. This mechanistic and fatalistic view of capitalism was fashionable for years among Communist theorists and Mr. Strachey fashionably followed it.

Marx's own formulation of the tendency of the falling rate of profit can be briefly enumerated. Marx divided capital outlay into two parts, one part he called constant capital, which consists of tools, machinery, etc. The other part he termed variable capital constitutes wage payments in order to buy labour-power and set it to pro-

ductive activity. It is this active labour power which alone produces value and a value greater than its upkeep. It is thus the sole source of surplus value and hence profits.

Nevertheless, a marked trend of capitalism is the increasing mechanisation of the process of production. This means that as capital outlay grows, a proportionally greater amount will be spent on means of production than on wage bills. But as we have seen, variable capital provides the sole source of value and hence profit. It follows then that as capital grows and with it the ratio of constant capital to variable capital, then less value and profit is produced in a given unit of capital. And the rate of profit which is computed on the total capital outlay must fall.

We can illustrate this by assuming that a given capital outlay of £10,000 is divided into £5,000 constant and £5,000 variable and that the rate of exploitation is 100%. In that case the profit will be £5,000 and the rate of profit 50%. If, however, the capital grows to £30,000, of which £20,000 is laid out in constant capital and £10,000 in variable capital and the rate of exploitation is 100%, then the profit will be £10,000. Thus proportionately less value—and profit has been produced on the larger capital and the rate of profit has fallen from 50% to 33 1/3%.

But Marx was quick to enumerate counter tendencies for keeping the rate of profit up. The main ones being, increasing productivity of labour due to the increasing efficiency of mechanisation. The cheapening of the elements of constant capital, resulting from increased productivity, which means that although the physical volume of constant capital increases, the value composition does not increase at the same rate. Then there is the existence of an industrial reserve army which acts as a reservoir of cheap labour-power and stimulates the setting up of new industries with a low ratio of constant to variable capital and hence a high rate of profit. The averaging in these higher profit rates with the lower profit rate of the older industries raises the overall rate of profit.

Thus the tendency of the rate of profit to fall is

THE IRISH ELECTIONS

THE main problem now confronting the people is to discover by what defect in our system it has come about that the nation, while never better equipped in knowledge and machinery to produce all its needs, is forced to see so much of that knowledge wasted and the machinery lying idle, while thousands of willing workers are unemployed and in need of the necessities of life."

Thus spoke Senator James Hickey, Chairman, at the Irish Labour Party's annual conference in Athlone, less than a year ago. At the time, Labour was the second largest party in a Coalition Government, which had been pledged to discover and remedy this defect along with all the other problems of the Irish working-class, who had elected them. They failed to do this and as a consequence, must now try to fill the opposition benches, with depleted ranks, while the task of administering Irish capitalism passes to Mr. De Valera and his colleagues in the Fianna Fail party. Speaking at an earlier Labour Party conference, shortly after being elected to power, Mr. B. Corish (A Labour Minister) said: "Workers could

merely a tendency among counter tendencies. Marx's own analysis of the matter gave no grounds for supposing which, if any, tendencies would prevail. Indeed for Marx to have advanced some economic law in abstraction to which capitalism must conform would have been contrary to his empirical method. For him such tendencies or counter tendencies could only be relevant to the concrete circumstances of any given stage of capitalism. It was left to Communist theorists and the facile Mr. Strachey to elevate this mere tendency to some law of social gravity.

In actual fact there is no direct evidence of some steady decline in the rate of profit over a long period. There are, of course, several profit rates in capitalism and a decline or drop in one of them is not necessarily a cause or even a factor for precipitating a crisis. And even if there did exist a tendency for the rate of profit to fall due to growth of the ratio of constant to variable capital, over a long period, it would be very slow and could not account for the sharp decline in profit levels and the widespread curtailment of investment associated with crises. Again the idea of what constitutes a profit norm for capitalists can undergo change and the norm of one period might be lower than the preceding one. Thus a lower rate of profit would constitute no disincentive for investment which is characteristic of a crisis situation. There is not the slightest reason for supposing that some alleged long term tendency of a falling rate of profit is organically connected with crises and ultimately the demise of capitalism. Such views are not propositions of Marx but projections of Communist politics.

Mr. Strachey in combatting the false assumptions he once held, believes he is combatting Marxism whereas it is the present Mr. Strachey quarrelling with the past Mr. Strachey without understanding what the quarrel is really all about.

We might add Mr. Strachey makes no reference in his latest book to his past errors. To these "errors" it seems we must also add, sins of commission and omission.

E. W.

look forward to the day when the spectre of emigration would have become a bad memory . . . it remained one of the fundamental aims of the Labour Party to see that every person who was willing to work would find decent employment in his own country." (*Dublin Evening Mail*, 30/9/49). Yet, in a statement issued on the 26th January of this year, explaining why he could no longer support the Government, Mr. S. McBride, ex-Minister for External Affairs pointed out that the unemployment figure was now 100,000 and that in the five year period 1951-6, over 200,000 people had been forced to emigrate. So much for Labour Party promises. In Dublin, where unemployment is most acute, the unemployed put up a candidate of their own and succeeded in capturing a seat at the expense of the party who claimed to have the solution to their problems! Work hard, they were told, and prosperity is yours. "If our national income becomes stagnant, if we refuse to work hard and produce more, social security becomes merely a delusion and a deception, said John Costello, the Prime Minister, in 1948, but

the man who was Minister for Social Welfare (plus the portfolio of Deputy Prime Minister), Wm. Norton (Leader of the Labour Party) had told the workers ten years before, that "Under our present social system, greater productivity means a lower wage for the worker and higher profits for the owner of industry." (*Labour News*, Dublin, 29/1/38). Though Costello could claim in the *Dail* (20/7/49) that the 1948 volume of production for all industries was 28% above the 1938 volume and the United Nations Statistical Bulletin issued on 6 November, 1947, included Eire among the countries showing monthly production averages higher than 1937, the International Labour Office in its cost of living findings for February, 1947, picked out Eire for special mention among four countries where "real wages have actually dropped below 1937 levels." Little wonder that the tide has again turned in favour of "Dev."

If however the working class of Ireland believe that their problems can be solved by Fianna Fail, they are in for a rude awakening; for the record of that party is a record of service to the only class which can be served under capitalism—the capitalist class. It was they who introduced the most repressive anti-working class legislation in the history of the State. The Wages (Standstill) Order, the Trade Union Bill, the Industrial Relations Bill (which set up the now notorious Labour Court), all measures designed to hinder the efficacy of

trade-union action, in the interest of Irish employers. After sixteen years of Fianna Fail rule, the Medical Superintendent of the Dublin Fever Hospital stated that: "Until the Dublin wage-earners and their wives and children were decently housed and fed, more beds in sanatoria and tuberculosis hospitals would be needed." (*Irish Independent*, 24/6/49). That was Fianna Fail before; may we expect a change now? The answer is an unqualified "NO" and to prove that he is consistent in his concern for the class he represents, Mr. De Valera's first statement after his election success was—yes, you guessed it—a clarion call for harder work! "One great, combined and sustained effort and the task will be done." (*Irish Times*, 8/3/57). And the "task?" To put a very shaky native capitalist class back on its feet again, while Irish workers continue to live in poverty and go to Mass on Sundays.

There is, however, one bright spot in this otherwise murky picture; the tiny (as yet) Socialist Party in Ireland, continues, with the limited means at its disposal, to point out to Irish workers the message of Socialism, that until the machinery referred to in the first paragraph is commonly held by ALL, it will continue to lie idle, however willing a non-owning class may be to use it. This wonderful world can be OURS when enough of us really want it AND KNOW HOW TO GET IT.

F.

THE CARMARTHEN ELECTION

This election, coming after previous Government defeats in other parts of the country was considered to be of extreme importance to the Labour Party. They, accordingly, went into action with everything they had. Their campaign, carefully planned, began with a softening up process—a constant hail of propaganda by local leaders. This was followed by the sending down of the heavy artillery, Attlee, Bevan and the ex-Labour Minister of Agriculture (Carmarthenshire being predominantly agricultural it was absolutely necessary to get the farmers vote).

Attlee came, bleated in the usual Attlee manner, and went; Bevan (the chief "star") arrived and, as is usual with "star turns" prices of admission were raised. For the privilege of listening to a man, who among other things created such a mighty fuss about "the bob on the bottle," many were induced to pay a bob to listen to a lot of wind. There is in this instance something to be said for paying a shilling for getting rid of it!

Megan (pardon us, Lady Megan!) captured the seat by virtue of the poor quality of the opposition and (such is the glamour of a title) by being the daughter of Lloyd George and a Lady. Poor little "Jenny," the Welsh Nationalist, despite a decidedly more attractive appearance, could only manage to increase her vote by a few thousand. Her policy proving more attractive to students, "intellectuals" and younger people generally.

The Liberal, fighting what was formerly a Liberal seat, lost undoubtedly because, bad as is the Liberal case, his manner of putting it over was profoundly worse. The general comment regarding him was "dim personoliaeth" (no personality).

Nevertheless the campaign was not without its

humour. Some students created quite an innovation by walking into one of Megan's meetings, completely silent. They sat throughout the meeting—completely silent and walked out in file at the end—completely silent—all the while with their jackets on inside out.

The Nationalist candidate, speaking in one of the many rural villages, wound up (so we are told) by stating that Wales required three immediate changes, whereupon a wag shouted "Yes, my gel—two wings and a centre!"

The election was indeed lively, and humorous. The candidates were called upon to speak mostly in Welsh, Lady Megan not quite being able to disguise a certain "Mayfair" accent despite speaking in her native tongue. The Liberal and Labour candidates were both in opposition to their respective party's policy in regard to the demand for a Welsh Parliament. Whilst the Welsh Nationalist probably lost much support from the chapels, and Pacifist Nonconformity generally by declaring support for Welsh Armed Forces!

On the whole one can say, as in other elections, it would have made no difference if each had said each others "piece" and the lot had got in.

"SOCIALAIDD."

TWO PAMPHLETS ON RUSSIA

"THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION—It's Origin and Outcome," (Published by the Socialist Party of Canada, obtainable from S.P.G.B. 50 pages, 6d., post free 8d.)

"RUSSIA SINCE 1917," (114 pages, 1/-, post free 1/3)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

APRIL



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

SHOULD WE JOIN THE LABOUR PARTY?

WHEN it was decided to form the Socialist Party of Great Britain fifty-three years ago those who made that decision did so against the advice of many individuals and groups that claimed to know a better way of getting Socialism—by joining the mass organisation, the Labour Party (known at that time as the Labour Representation Committee). The L.R.C. was, they frankly confessed, not a Socialist Party in any sense, only a trade union organisation formed to look after trade union interests in Parliament, linked up with a number of people anxious to push their pet schemes of social reform. All the more reason, our advisers said, why genuine Socialists should get inside where they would have a wide and receptive audience for Socialist propaganda. Some of those who said this did so with tongue in cheek—all they wanted was an excuse to further their careerist ambitions. Others could not preach Socialism in or out of the L.R.C. for they knew nothing about it. But there were some who meant what they said and tried to do what they promised. And for some time events gave the appearance of justification to their view. It was possible in those days to talk and write about Socialism within the ranks of the Labour Party and to argue the Socialist case with Labour supporters who were at least familiar with the works of the Socialist pioneers. They didn't accept the Socialist case but they were aware what that case was. Their most plausible line was to argue that Socialism is the only worth-while aim but that, the workers being what they were, the only practical policy was the triple one of making capitalism better through reforms and through eradicating war; of introducing nationalisation as an administrative stepping stone to Socialism; and of preaching Socialist principles to raise the level of understanding among the workers.

They builded worse than they knew

And what has it all achieved apart from the carving out of dazzling careers for many Labour leaders? Has it raised the level of knowledge in Labour Party ranks? In a not-intended sense it has. In and around Labour Party headquarters and among the M.P.s there is now a vast accumulation of knowledge and experience. They know all about winning votes and influencing electors. They have an encyclopedic knowledge of some of the intricacies of government and administration. They can compare with the Tories in a grasp of the pros and cons of joining the European free trade area, they can discuss income tax and purchase tax with the experts, they can hold their own in the wire-pulling and double talk at United Nations, and have proved in a series of wars that they can organise destruction as to the manner born. In short they have passed their apprenticeship and become so statesmanlike as to be barely distinguishable from their opponents the Tories. But where, oh where is the Socialist influence that was to permeate the ranks of the Labour Party?

Where are the "Pinks" of yesteryear?

The *Daily Mail* (8/3/57) had an editorial of a kind that is becoming more and more frequent in the capitalist Press. Its theme was that things are in a mess, that the features of the mess change but it is just as much a mess as that between the wars, that literally everything has been tried but without success, and nobody can understand just what is wrong and how to put it right.

Any Labour Party supporter will say that he is not a bit surprised that a *Daily Mail* journalist should write in this vein, but what has it to do with the Labour Party and Socialism? It has quite a lot to do with it. When the *Daily Mail* says that *everything* has been tried, forgetting that Socialism has never been tried, it does but echo what is written in the *Daily Herald*, *Tribune*, and other Labour journals. They are full of ingenious schemes for settling Capitalism's problems but never on any occasion do they put the Socialist alternative to Capitalism or show a Socialist understanding of the nature of the problems.

Challenge to Labourites

And if any member of the Labour Party thinks this is not true let him meet the challenge and show us when he has seen the Socialist case in the columns of the *Daily Herald* or the other journals, or heard it on a Labour Party platform (except from an S.P.G.B. opponent of the Labour Party) or at a Labour Party Conference.

The Socialist case is not heard in Labour Party ranks and if it were the man who put it would be regarded as a crank or an oddity not to be taken seriously. Far from being influenced by Socialist propaganda inside its ranks the Labour Party has now forgotten what little it once knew. It cannot now even argue against Socialism for it does not know what Socialism is. It no longer possesses what was once its sole attractive quality, an aimless but enthusiastic spirit of revolt against the iniquities of Capitalism. It is now a highly organised political machine for handling the affairs of British capitalism in between Tory administrations.

We still receive the same advice, as was given to the S.P.G.B. when it was formed, "get inside and influence the Labour Party." Then it was sufficiently plausible to merit argument; now it is a bad joke.

THE ROAD TO PEACE

A film with the above title was shown at our Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, on January 6th. The meeting was part of our indoor winter activities where first a documentary film on some topic of current importance is shown, then a Party speaker gives the Socialist point of view, after which the audience takes part in questions and discussion.

On the evening in question the film, which ran for about 20 minutes, showed some of the horrors of war, including faces shrivelled up by napalm bombs. It then gave a glowing account of the activities of the World Peace Council leading up to its 1954 conference.

Pictures of large demonstrations in many countries all with banners demanding peace and the banning of H-Bombs were shown, and in the emotional excitement worked up in the film with the aid of a choir, we were told that the common people everywhere wanted peace. War can bring only suffering and destruction, the crowds in their demonstrations stood for peace. Friendship and negotiations are put forward as the Road To Peace.

A film which shows the ugliness of war and comes out as the champion of peace might well receive the acclaim of everybody, that is, everybody who does not look beneath the surface. Since the 1954 conference of the World Peace Council there have been countless negotiations, including the Geneva Conference of 1955, but none of the powers including those which sponsor the World Peace Council have stopped making H-Bombs or any other preparation for war.

Our speaker had to explain the cause of war as being rooted in the Capitalist system of international rivalry for trade routes, markets and natural resources as the film left this out of account.

Having explained that wars arise from the very nature of Capitalism our speaker went on to show the futility of mass demonstrations of people who did not

want war but who, from lack of understanding, supported the conditions which cause it to occur. He went on to say that when the demonstrators went home and became once more individuals, each of them knowing no alternative to capitalism, helped to make up the millions who vote Labour, Conservative or so-called Communist, thus retaining the system from which war is inseparable.

The stand of the Socialist Party of Great Britain during both world wars and in the minor conflicts between and after them, including Korea, Suez, and Hungary, was stated clearly as flowing from our class objective recognising the world working-class as one with no interest in the employers profits.

Socialism was defined by our speaker as a world system where flags, nations, buying and selling, wages and profits would not exist but where common ownership of the natural and industrial resources of the earth would mean production for use and because their CAUSE had been removed, crises and wars could not occur.

Leadership, supported by the film, was condemned in favour of understanding.

The signing of petitions was stated to be futile whilst the Capitalists know they can count on the national feelings of the vast majority to support them and their wars; in fact a majority of those who signed the petition to "ban the bomb" voted for and helped to elect the very politicians they presented it to.

The question and discussion period showed the audience to be interested in how distribution would take place under Socialism without money and also how we could be sure we would have no dictators under Socialism. One contributor said money gives people "freedom of choice." These and other points raised were dealt with in the winding up and the meeting was in every way a success. How about coming to our next one?

H.B.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Annual Conference is being held once again at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 19th, 20th, and 21st, commencing 11 a.m. (Sat. 2.30 p.m.) Every effort is being made to ensure that a good delegation is present to discuss the work of the Party during the past year. Apart from work to be done and plans for future Party activity discussed, members have a good opportunity of meeting Comrades from the Provinces and other London Branches and making Conference a social venue. A dance and social will be held on the Saturday evening; a good dance band has been engaged and it now rests with Comrades and friends to enjoy themselves at this annual Party event.

Lewisham Branch has organised a series of four meetings to make known in greater detail the "Socialist View on Four Burning Issues," the plan for a European Common Market; the South African Racial Problem; the Rent Bill and the Cost of Living. Not a week goes by but that these issues the subject matter of thousands of words, both printed and spoken through Press and

Radio. These meetings will set those problems in their true perspective, evaluating carefully the interests at stake, and stating plainly what action is necessary to bring about a lasting solution. Although the meetings do not commence until May, the Branch Organiser and Branch members are anxious that members should know well in advance in order that they may advertise the meetings among their friends.



Comrade T. P. Gibbs. We regret to learn that this Comrade from Tottenham Branch died at the end of January. Comrade Gibbs had been an active member of the Branch until his death, having joined the Party in 1908. He was always relied upon to undertake any Branch work that was within his powers, helping to build up and maintain the regular sales of the SOCIALIST STANDARD. He was also the Dues Secretary of the Branch.

Comrade R. C. Walker, of Vancouver, Canada, is recovering from a serious illness and is at present unable to supply his Vancouver contacts with Party Literature. We understand that other Comrades are being contacted to carry on this work and meanwhile we wish Comrade Walker a very speedy recovery to good health.

At the time of going to press, the Wood Green and Hornsey Branch were discussing the question of con-

testing the Hornsey bye-election. In any case a publicity drive is under way in the area. Members, especially speakers, living near enough to help, should call at the branch on Thursday evening or contact the Wood Green and Hornsey Organiser at Head Office on Tuesday evenings.

Members are urged to give the fullest possible support to this campaign as from this activity we hope to build an organisation to co-ordinate North London publicity that will make our aims familiar throughout this area.

Sunday Evening Film Shows at Head Office. The last two meetings of this season are being held. The Organisers report that the series has been most successful and they look forward to "bigger and better" shows next Autumn. The meetings have been well attended and good discussions have taken place after the showing of the films.

P.H.

ODDS AND ENDS

Wicked Materialists?

Speaking recently (*News Chronicle*, 22/2/57), as chairman of the Church Assembly, Dr. Fisher, the Archbishop of Canterbury, said: "On so many bodies I belong to, really the business is ruined by these constant discussions about salaries, stipends, and superannuations, and all the rest. . . . I have come to the conclusion that it is an insidious form of pure materialism. It is a disease running through the community."

Poor Dr. Fisher! He seems so upset at those wicked materialists, i.e. parsons, with average pay, £650 a year; and, of course, all those railwaymen, clerks, dockers and the like, who all seem so materialistic in their desire for a better life—in this world. But then our dear Archbishop need not worry himself unduly about his own material well-being. He only receives £7,500 a year as Archbishop of Canterbury.

£400 for a Slave

Fairly recently King Saud of Saudi Arabia visited "the land of the free"—the United States of America, where he was fêted by President Eisenhower, and other American politicians. Little is known of his country except that there is sand—and more important—oil, in Saudi Arabia. But a recent United Nations report (*News Chronicle*, 22/2/57) gives us some idea just how "free" and democratic King Saud's oil-soaked land is. According to the report Saudi Arabia has 450,000 slaves—just 20% of the population. Prices on the Jeddah slave market were said to be between £200 and £400 for a girl under 15; £150 for a man under 40 and £40 for an old woman.

Like Christian Archbishops who also live quite well, Moslem Kings, such as King Saud, do not condemn slavery—chattel slavery in Arabia, and wage-slavery in Britain!

Human Nature?

"A most startling recent discovery was a tribe of Honest Men! It goes without saying that they were not

found in Christian lands. They were found in the jungles of Venezuela by Prof. Tanton, an ethnologist. He reports that these uncivilised people never lie, never make war, never kill and never rob.

They have no politicians, no advertisers, no crooks, and are so used to each other's honesty that they have no locks and keys, no monetary systems and don't even wear clothes.

All that remains is to protect these Maora Indians from the Christian missionaries, with their civilising influences." (*Freethinker*, 14/12/56).

Women in Antiquity

Women In Antiquity, by Charles Seltman (*PAN Books*, price 2/6d.), is quite an interesting and provocative little book, although the author has a number of axes to grind. Much of what he has written of women "in antiquity" will be challenged. For example, in his first chapter on Palaeolithic and Neolithic society he sees a situation where from 20 to 50 people live "comfortably" in a cave owned by the biggest male. And, further, after dealing with the activities of the women (such as scavenging for nuts, roots and fruit), he writes:—

"When one tries to imagine the structure of such a cave-family, one can think of two possibilities: firstly, the senior male (whose property the cave was) might have a series of wives from the oldest at twenty-four to the youngest at twelve, among whom there would inevitably exist a kind of harem-like jealousy productive of much unhappiness; secondly, the whole cave-family group may have lived in what zoologists call a 'clone,' in which the women were shared in common by the men." (p. 14.)

Of course, all of this is purely speculative, and in contradiction to the findings of other anthropologists, who often see an absence of jealousy in primitive communities and who write not of a dominant male but of sexual equality—"sexual communism"—and "group marriage" during this early period of pre-history. Seltman's ideas on this period seem to be much akin to those of Freud with his dominant father, the jealous sons and the "Primal Horde." Still, in the main our author is on the side of the women! He generally sees the position of

women "in antiquity" as a favourable one compared to their position in some countries today. And he has little sympathy for the Church's views on women and sexual relations in general.

"Freedom's Foe—The Vatican"

This book is by a "free-thinking" protestant, and is a counter-blast to Catholic Action. In the main it reiterates the views put forward in greater detail by Rose Manhattan in *The Catholic Church Against The Twentieth Century*.

Adrian Pigott, the author of *Freedom's Foe*, deals with the Catholic Church's alleged former collaboration with Fascism and Nazism, with the "evils of priest craft," the misdeeds of some of the Popes, the "cruelty of the Catholic Church," the extreme poverty to be found in some Catholic countries such as Spain and Ireland (he tells us that "Protestant countries have little discontent or poverty . . .") and the activities of the Church in Britain and the United States.

No doubt many of his criticisms are valid—but what can the Protestant critics of Catholicism, such as our author, offer the working class of Britain and elsewhere? The Church of England, of whom Marx once said, that it would rather give up its Thirty-nine Articles of Faith than give up one thirty-ninth of its property? Neither Protestants nor Catholics, Moslems or Buddhists, have a solution to the problems confronting ordinary people.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Profits of Building Societies

A reader (M. H., Monmouthshire), asks about the profits of building societies:—

"The Marxian Socialist position is that Rent, Profit and Interest is derived from Surplus Value. In the case of Building Societies, however, the Interest paid to their shareholders is obtained directly from the extra monies, over and above the cash purchase price of the property, paid in by the buyer from his wages or salary. How then can it be said that Building Society Profits and Interests are derived from Surplus Value?"

REPLY

The answer is that the three items, interest on borrowed money, rent and profits, all come out of surplus value and all surplus value arises out of the exploitation of the workers, the wages they receive being less than the value their labour adds during the production of commodities.

If the individual Capitalist worked entirely on his own capital, owned his own land and did his own wholesaling and retailing he would not have to share the surplus value with the landlord, the banker, the merchant. As he cannot in any event realise the surplus value in the commodities he owns until they have been sold it often suits him to make use of these other agencies, in which case they receive a return on their capital more or less proportionate to the size of their capital; and what they receive is in fact part of the surplus value created in production.

The building society is an intermediary between the

Only Socialism has an answer to those problems. All the same this little book is worth 1/6d.

Freedom's Foe—The Vatican, is published by the Wickliffe Press, Fleet Street.

Are you Fed-up?

Do you dislike the Foreman or the Chief Clerk? And when you get home from work at night, do you feel tired, frustrated and fed-up?

Do you find life worrying, insecure and purposeless? Do you find it a job to "make ends meet"; to save enough money for a holiday, or a new suit?

Do you get fed up with the threat of war with the promises of the politicians?

Do you? Well, then, isn't it about time you did something about it. No!—don't take " . . . 's" little liver pills, or "H . . . 's" just before you go to bed, because, ten-to-one, whilst this present system of society remains you will feel much the same the next day. So why not get to grips with society itself? Begin to study the world in which you live. And when you understand it, your position in it, the causes of the problems that worry you, and make you insecure, join with others who know about our present system—capitalism—and with them help to change it to a society free from insecurity, poverty, the threat of war; to establish a Socialist world—a classless, moneyless system of society. Why not start now?

PETER E. NEWELL.

builders of houses who want to sell them, not let them, and house buyers who cannot afford to put down the purchase price. The building society makes it possible for the builder to sell his property and get paid at once, and for this the builder gives up to the building society some of the surplus value created in the building industry. The owners of houses that are not new can also sell with the aid of a building society.

The building society usually depends largely on money deposited with it, as well as on money invested in its shares. It is in this respect like a bank, which makes loans at varying rates of interest and pays a lower rate of interest to depositors. Banks also make loans for house purchase. The profits of the banks, like those of the building societies, derive from the surplus value created in production.

Ed. COMM.

Slow Progress of the Socialist Movement

A reader (M. H., Monmouthshire), asks the following:—

If the S.P.G.B. concept of Socialism and Socialist organisation is the correct one and is thus the view which will eventually have to be embraced by workers in all countries, if they are to achieve Socialism, how is it that no other country in the world can show an organisation based on the same Socialist principles as the S.P.G.B.? The questioner is aware of the existence of the "Companion Parties" but notes that these flourish in English speaking areas only, and at best these bodies seem to be no more than tiny discussion groups adhering to the S.P.G.B.

REPLY

It is not easy to understand what exactly our corres-

pendent is driving at. Socialism can only be achieved by the organised political action of a Socialist working class and the factors making for the growth of the Socialist movement operate in all countries. But nobody has ever suggested that all conditions (economic, political, climatic and geographical) are identical in all countries and therefore the growth of Socialist parties must be at identically the same rate everywhere. These present variations are of little importance, and as the Socialist movement grows stronger they will probably decrease since the numerically stronger sections of the international Socialist movement could help the others to overcome some of the difficulties.

Our companion parties are not "tiny discussion groups," but political organisations carrying on propaganda for Socialism and based upon the same principles as the S.P.G.B.

The Socialist Labour Party of America

A correspondent (M. H., Monmouthshire), who is a seaman just back from U.S.A. notes the S.P.G.B. view in an article in the November SOCIALIST STANDARD that the American workers had no interests at stake in the recent Presidential and other elections and asks:—

Why does this article ignore the existence of a Presidential Candidate put forward by the Socialist Labour Party of America? Since this candidate, together with the other candidates put forward by the S.L.P. stood for a programme free from social reforms and one which called for the abolition of the wages system and its replacement

by a society based on common ownership of the means of living, such a society to be inaugurated by the democratic method and by a class-conscious proletariat, what advice would the S.P.G.B. have given to American workers who felt that their votes should have gone to the S.L.P.?

REPLY

The article did not refer to any but the Democratic and Republican candidates, for the reason that it was based on reports in the English Press which did not give information about the candidates of small organisations.

Our correspondent gives his version of what the S.L.P. candidates stood for in such terms that the reader of his question may conclude that here were candidates fighting an election on S.P.G.B. principles. With due respect for our correspondent's choice of words in which to describe the S.L.P. platform we, knowing the past activities of the S.L.P., do not suppose for one moment that it really was identical with the S.P.G.B. position. We await from our correspondent (or anyone else who can help) copies of S.L.P. election literature from which this can be verified.

In the meantime may we point out that the S.P.G.B. does not "give advice" to workers how to vote. Those who are Socialists will know how to vote and those who are not Socialist could only vote for a Socialist by mistake and we naturally would do our best to prevent that mistake being made.

Ed. COMM.

THE ECONOMICS OF RENT CONTROL

THE Socialist's task is to preach Socialism and work to bring a Socialist society into being. This involves understanding and explaining the nature of the present social system; that it is a class-divided system in which the workers, in their own interest, need to struggle on the wages field and to take any favourable opportunity to press for higher wages.

Social reformers, including the members of the Labour Party disregard (or explicitly reject) the class-struggle. They see instead a world in which, as they suppose, it is possible bit by bit to gain benefits for the workers and thus progress towards a new social system. It is a deceptively plausible argument; but it rests all the time on a great illusion. The argument runs like this, "Would it not be a good thing if on top of his wages the worker with children received children's allowances? And if his wages remained the same and food prices were reduced by Government subsidies? And if his wages remained the same and his rent were reduced by rent restriction and housing subsidies?" It looks good, too good. It is too good to be true. The catch in it is the assumption that these "benefits" are added to wages and that wages can look after themselves. In truth the reforms mentioned, along with others of the same kind, have had the effect of undermining and weakening the working-class struggle for higher wages—and they were designed for that purpose.

Advocates of children's allowances urged their adoption to avoid a general raising of wages; incidentally setting the married against the single workers. Food subsidies under the war time Coalition and under the 1945 Labour Government were used to manipulate the cost of living index in order to mask the real rise in the cost of

living and fob off wage claims. And rent control was devised for the purpose of discouraging the workers from fighting for higher wages at a time when low unemployment gave them a favourable opportunity to do so. It, too, has divided the workers paying restricted rents from the others, in high rented houses.

The final answer to the whole argument of the reformists is the fact that it was the Labour Government (following the example of Tories and Liberals before them) that pursued the policy of the "wage-freeze," thus knocking the bottom out of their own case. They demanded of the workers that, in face of a rising cost of living, they should be content with "social services" in place of wage increases: and asked employers not to give higher wages.

The late Sir Stafford Cripps, Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Labour Government, defined this policy in a speech in the House of Commons on 27 September, 1949, when dealing with the White Paper on "wage restraint" issued the previous year:—

"The White Paper must . . . be observed strictly, and it is only in the exceptional and genuine cases where some wage survives which, together with all the subsidies and social services, is insufficient to provide a family a minimum standard of living, that there can be any possible excuse for going forward for an increase" (our italics).

The occasion of the speech was the devaluation of the pound, which Sir Stafford had denied for months that he intended to enact but which he had just announced. He knew that this would raise the cost of living still further but again he warned the workers that they must not expect wages to rise:—

"Especially and specifically there can, in our view, be

no justification for any section of the workers trying to recoup themselves for any rise in the cost of living due to the altered exchange rate."

So the reformists who promised social reforms and low rents and prices to be a form of wage increase, ended up by asking the workers to put up with higher prices and a wage freeze!

The Curious History of Rent Control

Anyone who judges the present dispute over rents merely by what Labour Party leaders say about the Tory bill to free large numbers of houses from control and to raise the rents of those still under control, will gain the impression that it is a clear issue between Tories, who are against low rents, and Labourites, who favour them. Yet the history of rent restriction shows that this does not fit the facts. It was a Tory Government that reimposed rent restriction when the war broke out in 1939 and a Tory Minister of Health, Mr. W. H. Long, in a Coalition Government, who started it all in 1915. What has to be explained therefore is why the Tories who began it, later on wanted to wipe it out. The explanation is really quite a simple one. The Tories (and Liberals) introduced it in 1915 and again in 1939 to deal with a particular problem arising out of war and when that emergency was over and new conditions arose they saw no point in keeping it in existence. What the MacMillan Government is doing now, through its new legislation, is, though on a restricted scale, what the Tory Government wanted to do in 1923. In that year the Onslow Committee, set up by the Government, recommended that rent control be entirely abolished and rents left to the free play of supply and demand. It was to be carried out in three stages so that by June, 1925, the last vestige of the war-time legislation would have been removed and landlords would be legally entitled to get what rents they could, as had been the situation before 1915. But this was so unpopular that the Government got cold feet and decided to make minor relaxations only so a large proportion of working class houses still had controlled rents when, in 1939 (again because of war) rents were pegged at their existing level.

Parallel with legally restricted rents was the policy of Government subsidies to enable new houses to be built and let at rents below the amount required to cover the full cost. This, too, was not a Labour Party invention but was started in 1919 by the Liberal-Tory Coalition Government. Recently the Tories sharply reduced the amount of subsidies and Mr. Butler, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced that the intention was to abolish these Government subsidies entirely (House of Commons, 26 October, 1955).

Why the war-time Governments Restricted Rents

As soon as the war broke out in 1914 the building of new houses was curtailed, and later on brought almost to a standstill, because men and materials were wanted for the armies and munition making. The result was that rents began to rise along with the rise in the prices of food and clothing and other necessities. As there was little unemployment and a great shortage of skilled workers, the members of trade unions began to press for higher wages. The Government (and the employers) wanted to prevent the workers, especially the skilled men who were very favourably placed, from taking advantage of the labour shortage by striking. The Government appealed to their patriotism, with the help of Labour leaders; promised to keep the cost of living down; and

took the drastic step of making it illegal for landlords to raise rents above the 1914 level. At the same time they fixed maximum wages for many workers. This policy of "wage restraint" succeeded almost beyond expectation and throughout the war wage rates, particularly those of engineering craftsmen, were kept far behind the steady rise of the cost of living. The following comment was published in the *Labour Year Book*, 1919 (published by the T.U.C., Labour Party and Labour Research Department):—

"By the spring of 1915 the skilled engineers would have been able, if they had acted without consideration for the national position, to demand a monopoly price for their labour—a situation which had not occurred in this century since the Black Death of 1381. And just as the government of that day had met the situation by a statute fixing the maximum price that must be paid for labour, so in 1915 the government passed the Munitions Act, which had substantially the same effect. Compulsory arbitration and the Leaving Certificate clauses combined to prevent the engineer from getting better terms for his labour by withdrawing that labour, either collectively or individually" (p. 235).

The article in the *Labour Year Book* went on to point out that at the end of 1916 engineers wage rates were only 20% above the 1914 level. By the same date the cost of living had risen by 65%. And just after the end of the war (in January, 1919), while all industrial wage-rates had, on average, risen to about 100% above the level of 1914, the cost of living had gone up by 120% in spite of the freezing of rents at the 1914 level.

This policy was followed again in the second world war though the true picture was obscured by the falsity of the Government's cost of living index. On a real estimate of the rise of the cost of living during the war large numbers of skilled craftsmen (as well as most clerical workers) had increases of wage rates below the increase of prices. "Wage restraint" was continued after the war by the Labour Government and Mr. Richard Crossman, Labour M.P. and member of the Executive of the Labour Party, afterwards admitted how restricted rents and other factors were used by the Labour Government to keep wages down.

"The fact is that, ever since 1945, the British trade unionist could have enjoyed a far higher wage packet if his leaders had followed the American example and extorted the highest possible price for labour on a free market.

"Instead of doing so, however, they exercised extreme wage restraint. This they justified by pointing out to the worker the benefits he enjoyed under the Welfare State—food prices kept artificially low by food subsidies; rents kept artificially low by housing subsidies; rent restriction; and, in addition, the Health Service" (*Daily Mirror*, 15/11/55).

Rent Control not a Working Class Issue

In 1915 the Labour Party supported the Government's decision to peg rents at the 1914 level and the Labour Executive in its report to their annual conference in 1916, claimed that "assuredly this Bill was a very big step against certain class interests." The implication was—and every Labour Party supporter firmly believes it still—that a victory had been gained by the working class against the Capitalist class. It was nothing of the kind. It was a measure for the safeguarding of capitalism taken at the expense of one section of the propertied class, the landlords. It was not a victory for the working class though then, and since, it may seem to have been in the interests of those individuals who happen to live in a house with controlled rent. It was intended as a means of dissuading the workers as a whole from pressing for the higher wages they could have got, and in this it succeeded.

Not only is this shown by what happened to wages and the cost of living in Britain during the two world wars and under the 1945 Labour Government, but it was demonstrated also by experience in continental countries, including Austria and Germany.

Low Rents, Low Wages, High Profits

The effect of rent restriction on workers' wages was inquired into more than once between the wars by the International Labour Office. One of their reports was *The Workers Standard of Life in countries with Depreciated Currencies*. (ILO, Geneva, 1925). Dealing with Vienna it showed that, because the Government had prevented rents from rising,

"the item of expenditure on rent in working class budgets was reduced to practically nothing in July, 1923, it was barely 1 per cent. of the total expenditure of a working-class family, whereas before the war it might be estimated at about 20 per cent. The change, however, directly benefited certain classes of workers only. But this applied only to unskilled wage earners in a few industries. Most of the workers were in the same position as those of Germany; they had practically no liabilities under the heading of rent, but the corresponding amount was not included in their wages. The actual gain was thus nil." (p. 97).

The Report went on to say that the real gainers were the employers, because they were able to reduce wages to the full extent of the missing item, expenditure on rent.

Of course the losers were the landlord section of the propertied class.

Tory and Labour both now favour Higher Rents

Though the landlords had to put up with the sacrifice of their interests during the two wars they naturally used all the influence they had to get rid of rent restriction and thus restore the value of their investments when war ended. A number of factors helped them, including the remorseless economic law of capitalism that if there is no profit there is no production. If investors cannot get something like the normal rate of profit on house property they don't invest money in house-building or in repairs. So both the Tories and the Labour Party are agreed that the mere perpetuation of rent restriction is not wanted and must go. In 1923 the Labour Party members on the Onslow Committee recommended that rents should be reduced below the level then permitted under the Acts but no Labour Party spokesman advocates this now. Their main new proposal is that all rent-controlled houses occupied by a tenant be taken over by local authorities, repaired and improved and, as the Labour Party frankly admits, "there will inevitably be some increase in rent." (Labour Party "Talking Points," No. 15, 1956).

The Tories on the other hand intend to free a large number of houses and raise the permitted rent in others, with the *certainty* that many rents will go up and the *promise* that some of the existing very high decontrolled rents will come down. In their view the private landlords, sure of a higher return, will look after the condition of the houses. Both parties agree that the present situation, with a great number of slums, and other hundreds of thousands of houses deteriorating fast into a slumdom, cannot go on.

The Wages Front in 1923 and 1957

The Tories wanted to get rid of rent control in 1923 because it had served its war-time purpose of discouraging wage increases and because by 1923 there were so many

unemployed that the trade unions were not in a position to win wage-claims by strikes. They dropped the plan then because it was unpopular and they needed workers votes in elections.

In the past few years the situation has been different from that of 1923. There has been little unemployment and the Tories tried to carry on after 1951 the Labour Government's policy of wage restraint, but with increasing lack of success.

Whereas under the Labour Government from 1945 to 1951 wage-rates lagged behind the rising cost of living, since the Tories came in in 1951 a more aggressive attitude on the part of the workers has played its part in causing wage-rates to rise faster than the cost of living index.

In these changed circumstances the policy of "wage-restraint" by persuasion from above is on its way out, and with it goes any remaining belief by the Government and the employers that it is worth their while keeping widespread rent control in being as a means of discouraging wage claims. Far too many workers are already in decontrolled houses (including the high rented Council houses) or furnished apartments, for the workers as a whole to be as much influenced in that direction as they used to be.

It may be asked what, in face of this situation, is the Socialist Party's policy for the rent and housing problem. The answer can be brief. The workers' housing problem will not be solved while Capitalism remains. It is as old as capitalism—the first legislation to solve it was over 100 years ago—and it will last as long as Capitalism, whether the Government be Tory or Labour. It is just a part of the problem of working class poverty, for which neither of those parties has any solution whatever.

H.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," April, 1907)

Mr. Dooley on Capital and Labour

At Christmas time Capital gathered together his happy family around him an' in th' prisence iv th' ladies iv th' neighbourhood gave thim a short oration. "Me brave la-ads," said he, "we've had a good year (cheers). I have made a millyon dollars (sensation). I attribute this to me supeeryer skill, aided by ye'r arnest efforts at th' bench an' at th' forge (sobs). Ye have done so well that we wont need so many iv ye as we did (long and continyous cheerin'). Those iv us who can do two men's wurruk will remain, an' if possible do four. Our other faithful servants" he says, "can come back in th' spring" he says "if alive" he says. An' th' bold artysans tossed their paper caps in th' air an' give three cheers fr Capital.

They wurruked till ol' age crept on thim, an' thin retired to live on th' wish-bones an' kind wurruks they had accumyulated.

Mr. Dooley in *Capital & Labour*.

"HOW WELL IS THE WELFARE STATE?"

The continuation of this article has had to be omitted from issue owing to pressure on space. It will be resumed next month.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

at
CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1.

on
FRIDAY, SATURDAY and SUNDAY
APRIL 19th, 20th and 21st.

11 a.m. Friday and Sunday: 2.30 p.m. Saturday.

LEWISHAM MEETINGS

at
CO-OP HALL, 1, DAVENPORT ROAD
Off Lewisham High Street
Rushey Green, S.E.6.

on Mondays at 8 p.m.

May 6th "The Plan for a European Common Market"—E. Wilmott.

" 20th "The South African Racial Conflict"—P. Lawrence.

See News Briefs for further information

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ... 11.15 a.m.—2 p.m.
3.30—6 p.m.

East Street
(Walworth) ... April 7th 11 a.m.
" 14th 12.30 p.m.
" 21st 11 a.m.
" 28th 12.30 p.m.

Whitestone Pond
(Hampstead) ... 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park ... 11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Lincolns Inn Fields ... Tuesdays & Fridays
Finsbury Pavement ... Tuesdays
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.

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THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS at HEAD OFFICE

Documentary Films followed by brief Socialist comments at H.Q.

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, S.W.4.

(near Clapham North Tube Station)

Every Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting is then open for questions and discussion which can be continued in the Social Room afterwards when light refreshments will be on sale. Visitors particularly welcome.

April 7th "Does it Matter What You Think?"—Gilmac

" 14th "Bolivia"—Edmund Grant

THIS IS THE LAST OF THE
PRESENT SERIES

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol. 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Bennie Road, Dundee.

EDINBURGH. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh.

OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

REDHILL AND REIGATE DISTRICT—C. E. Smith, 88, Chart Lane, Reigate, Surrey.

SWANSEA—Enquiries to V. Brail, 17, Bryn a Wollon Rd., Pencuolgi, Nr. Llanelly.

Copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD are on sale at the newspaper stands as named below. Members and sympathisers are asked to buy from these stands when possible:—

"THE BLACKSTOCK": Finsbury Park. (Sunday morning).

"PRINCES HEAD": Battersea Park Road. (Daily—mornings).

GREAT PORTLAND ST. Tube Station: (Sunday morning).

"RED LION": Kingsbury Rd., Hendon. Sunday morning).

RUSSELL Sq. Tube Station: (Daily).

SHEPHERDS BUSH Tube Station: (Daily—morning).

WIMBLEDON Stn.: (Daily—morning).

WEALDSTONE Station (Sunday morning).

KENTON Station (Sunday morning).

HAMMERSMITH—King Street. (SMITH'S (not W. H.) Newsagents).

HOLLOWAY: Paper shop, D. Johnston, Brecknock Road.

FINSBURY PARK STATION: Main paper stall.

NAG'S HEAD, HOLLOWAY: Main paper stall.

HIGHBURY CORNER: Main paper stall—station.

COLLIERS WOOD: Underground Station (Daily—morning).

HIGHBURY BARN (Paper Stall) Highbury Park, N.5.

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at

CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1.

on SATURDAY evening APRIL 21st

7.30 p.m. to 11 p.m.

Refreshments

Tickets 3/6

PUBLIC MEETING

at

DENISON HOUSE, 296 VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD,

(Nr. Victoria Station)

on

SUNDAY, 7th APRIL, at 7 p.m.

"ANOTHER GENERAL STRIKE?"

Speakers: R. CRITCHFIELD

J. D'ARCY

Admission Free

Questions and Discussion

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD April, 1957

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. April 4th and 18th.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o. H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (April 10th and 24th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, April 1st, 15th and 29th at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney. Sec.: A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak Edgware. Branch meets alternate Tuesdays, 8 p.m., April 9th and 23rd, 108c, Goldhurst Terrace, Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 11, Oakfield Road, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

MANCHESTER Branch meets the first Thursday in each month (April 4th), George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.; Sec.: J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. Phone: DIDEbury 5789.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Gisle, 17, Coiswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae," Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, Pelham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eatham, S.E.9.

HACKNEY BRANCH LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS

NOW on Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

at

Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney, E.8.

April 10th (Subject and Speaker to be announced).

***THE* SOCIALIST STANDARD**

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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**SHOULD IRISH WORKERS SUPPORT
THE I.R.A.?**

4^D

Monthly

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THIS WORLD OF VIOLENCE AND CRUELTY

THERE are politicians in every land who tell their Parliaments and peoples that they can see a bright future before the country; and millions of ordinary men and women who go on with their jobs and their family concerns believing it to be true. The politicians talk like this, whether or not they have confidence in their own words, because it is expected of them, it is their trade. And the millions who accept it at face value do so because they know no better and because they trust their politicians. But anyone who reads and thinks about world affairs knows that it is an uncertain hope, not a probability. They know that the governments are desperately preparing for the possibility of a third world war that would, if the latest scientific weapons are used, destroy great cities and centres of industry, and lay waste whole countrysides with unheard-of loss of life.

Those who know this react in different ways. Some give way to despair, others resign themselves to what seems to them to be unavoidable. Others again put what trust they can conjure up in United Nations or in political parties or religious bodies that preach peace in a tormented world.

The solution to be aimed at

The kind of solution that must be found if the human race is to find security, and civilisation is to survive, has been seen more or less clearly by many people. The solution must include the abolition of armaments and war and the peoples of the different nations, large and small, must learn how to live peaceably together. So far so good, but how is this to be brought about? Clearly the mere holding of international conferences and the making of speeches in favour of peace is not enough. We have had them in plenty for a long time and the hatreds and tensions only become worse. What, then, is the nature of the problem? Is it one that will respond to appeals to men's good nature and humanitarian sentiments, and their "sense of justice"? The answer has to be an emphatic no, for the evils and cruelties are not in the main perpetrated by consciously or wantonly evil and cruel men, but by people who believe their motives to be above reproach and who find themselves forced into actions they deplore by forces beyond their control. When war breaks out those who carry out the orders to kill and destroy feel fully justified by their patriotism and their belief that they are fighting for their country's survival against the aggression of the enemy. Patriotism for them justifies and ennoble every vile action.

The first step to understanding the problem is to face up to the fact that the mass of people in the "enemy" countries feel themselves to be just as fully justified in their patriotism. All the warring armies and peoples believe they are fighting in a just cause. How, then, are they to be reconciled? Can it be done, as some believe, by individuals preaching reconciliation and non-violence?

The Case of Mahatma Gandhi

Gandhi was an individual who became known universally as a believer in non-violence. With some backslidings but with a large measure of consistency, he tried to persuade the Indian independence movement to accept his teachings and he cherished the belief that by so doing they would build up a nation that would be an example to all and in particular to Western civilisation, with its trust in armed force. Before his death by assassination he was to see India divided into two countries facing each other at war over Kashmir. He who had hoped his fellow-countrymen would accept his view that "a society's civilisation should not be judged by its power over the forces of nature, nor by the power of its literature and art, but by the gentleness and kindness of its members towards all living things," was to confess his failure. Not many months before he died he said: "There was a time when India listened to me. To-day I am a back number. I have no place in the new order where they want an army, a navy and an air force, and what not. I can never be a party to all that."—(*Times*, 29/9/1947.)

Why it Failed

Gandhi and those who shared his illusions may not have understood why he failed, but Socialists understand it. The reason can be found in a circumstance that he, in his blindness, regarded as an incidental, of no importance. His speeches were full of talk about an India of peasants and handicraftsmen, but his movement was mainly financed by Indian "big business." He thought he was doing one thing but his movement and its capitalist backers were in fact doing something else; they were making India into a great capitalist State, to take its place alongside the other capitalist powers, Western and Eastern, America, Britain, Russia, and the rest. His was a beautiful dream that other men used for their grim reality.

Capitalism—enemy of the human race

Capitalism must have armies and navies and air forces and the nationalism and patriotism that go with them. Capitalism cannot disarm, and while the world remains capitalist there can be no peace and no reconciliation between the nations. Preaching "non-violence" and

"universal justice" in a capitalist world is useless because all who accept capitalism—most of them without having started to recognise what sort of thing it is—are firmly convinced that the trading activities of their own particular country are thoroughly right and necessary. They no more think of questioning the efforts of their own government to capture overseas markets, hold strategic territories and trade routes and acquire sources of raw materials, than they question the internal trading activities and rivalries of manufacturing companies.

The Solution—Socialism

The Socialist questions and condemns them all; they are all part of the capitalist social system that Socialists aim to replace by Socialism.

HE JOINED THE WRONG ARMY

NO medals, glory, and a brilliant army career for poor George Christopher Grice (26), of Acton—he joined the wrong army. He was once a member of the Irish Republican Army, and for harbouring some ammunition in his room he was recently sentenced at Middlesex Sessions to twelve months' incarceration in one of Her Majesty's prisons (*Manchester Guardian*, 15/3/57).

This unfortunate erstwhile (irregular) soldier was obviously unaware of the benefits of being a member of the (Regular) British Army, whose manifold attractions are amply depicted in a splendid full-page advertisement in the *Manchester Guardian*, (26/2/57). A list of these attractions (including a good salary and prospects, plenty of travel, and opportunities for sport—blood sports, no doubt) are suitably embellished by an enormous picture of an exploding atom bomb to stress the peaceful nature of army life. Had Mr. Grice seen this advert, his future career might have taken a more profitable turn: for instance, the advert, assures us that if he were exceptional (doubtful, we fear, in view of his inability to conceal a paltry collection of bullets successfully) there would be nothing between him and a Field Marshal's baton. Furthermore, as a subaltern in his first regimental duty, he would "probably be in charge of 40 men and some thousands of pounds worth of equipment." This makes the grenade and the box containing 26 rounds of .32 ammunition that were found in his room look pretty small-time.

But Mr. Grice does not seem to have been a very steel-hearted soldier—he left the I.R.A. in January, 1955, because, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, "he did not agree with the violent side of I.R.A. activities." Mr. Cassell (the prosecuting counsel) was quick to comment on this pacifist (and if we may say so, typically Irish) attitude to army life by asking Mr. Grice, "There is no point in having an army unless it is going to fight, is there?" Perhaps Mr. Cassell had also missed the army advert. (It is headed **PLAY A LEADING PART IN KEEPING WORLD PEACE**) which states that if you join the Regular Army "you are declaring that you are prepared actively to help maintain peace." In other words, the army will ensure peace even if it has to use the H-bomb in the process. Clear? Pursuing this peaceful theme, the advert, declares that the armed forces of the Western nations form "a weighty stabilising influence in a world disturbed

Capitalism rests on the basic fact of the exploitation of man by man, of the working class by the capitalist class. Rent, interest and profit, all forms of income from property ownership, are the proceeds of the "legalised robbery" of the wage and salary earning class that produces the wealth of the world for others to own. International competition that leads to war between the nations is an inevitable product of world capitalism, which in turn rests on class division and class struggle within the nations.

All who want to rid the world of war and cruelty, want and insecurity, must turn their thoughts and efforts to international action to rid the world of the social system known as capitalism, a system that has outlived its usefulness to mankind and the continuance of which now threatens the very existence of the human race. H.

by -isms and -ologies" (capitalism and theology, for instance?), and if you join the British Army "you work for the continued existence of the British way of life." We would add that with explosives such as are depicted in the advert, you would also contribute notably to the British way of death.

Mr. Grice's unfortunate choice of armies was further highlighted by the chairman of the magistrates who presided over his trial. Had he joined the British Army, Mr. Grice would have had access to all kinds of beautiful weapons (the advert mentions guided missiles); but he chose a less well organised outfit, whose relations with the British Government, moreover, are strained to say the least. Hence the chairman told Mr. Grice "bullets are for killing, and the one thing we have got to ensure in this country is that bullets are not obtained. People are dying daily because misguided young men like you collect bullets and let them off." In case any reader gets the impression that the chairman's statement is a piece of strong pacifist propaganda, we would hazard that it is mainly directed against people in those organisations which oppose the British state machine (the Cypriot "terrorists," Mau Mau, for example): For, under different circumstances, did not the British government arrange for arms and ammunition to be parachuted to the Maquis and other resistance groups during the late war to encourage their guerrilla struggles against enemy forces? It all depends on which side you're on, and poor Mr. Grice backed a loser.

But perhaps there are drawbacks to joining any army. As Mr. Cassell said, there is no point in having an army unless it's going to fight, and Mr. Grice's father said in the witness-box: "I put down this lad's downfall to the war, when I was away."

Amid this welter of contradictions, the Socialist message stands out clearly. Grice and millions of other young men of the working-class throughout the world are wasting their time and causing themselves untold suffering by supporting their various capitalist groups however attractively the different military needs are cloaked in propaganda to pander to nationalist prejudices. We urge the Grices of the world to give earnest consideration to the case for Socialism the only hope for world peace and the future of mankind. M. L.

STRIKES, STRIKES, AND MORE STRIKES

WHEN are people going to fully realise that the old ruling class stunt of "Divide and Rule" is operating today—much more fully than it ever did in years gone by?

The train driver gets his mean and petty one, five, or perhaps ten shillings more than his fireman; and for this he sells his peace of mind. They can hardly be comrades, under these conditions.

According to the *News Chronicle* of March 21st, 1957, the "Queen Mary" sailed at 1.35 a.m. She was permitted to do this, ONLY BY THE HELP OF ONE SECTION OF THE WORKING CLASS whilst another section said: "No. She must not sail."

Why, oh why do not workers realise that, while they back a profit, or money system, this sort of action is, and will be in order? The men operating the tugs will doubtless be "sent to Coventry" or "blackened" in one way or another. The whole business is utterly stupid, when the answer is so clear, if workers would only accept clear-cut thinking, by themselves, for themselves.

The miners gain a temporary advantage over the transport operators, or dock workers, so temporary that, by the end of a year, the whole business of strikes starts again. Money, more Money, and still more Money, is needed, to try to keep up with the cost of living.

Money. Some workers are now being paid with £5 notes; pay envelopes have to be made larger and larger. We may soon require a sack to take the wages home to the wife—and still she will look at it, and wonder if there is enough to buy little Johnny a new coat.

One thing is abundantly clear, when you study the world around you—your wages, salaries, fees, commissions, or whatever you call them, are the price of your labour power. Though you must struggle to increase them, they will never represent more than a meagre standard of living, compared with what will be possible when we decide to run the world by civilised standards.

Your masters will struggle with you over a few shillings more or less per week. Then, when you have gained your point, they may let the purchasing power of the £ fall, or devalue it deliberately, as they did by 40 per cent. in September, 1949. They know that, whilst you are struggling to make ends meet, and to gain a "victory"

of a few more shillings, you will not be devoting your attention to a study of Capitalism itself—the economic system that keeps you poor in a world of potential plenty.

When are you going to change your approach to this international social scandal? It is no use leaving it to your masters, or to those members of the Labour, Liberal, Tory, or Communist Parties, who are committed to the maintenance of Capitalism, in one form or another. (Whatever form it takes, it will still keep you—the majority, poor).

We, the working class, now run the world for the benefit of the Capitalist class. Why not run it for ourselves? The leaders who are constantly exhorting or cajoling you, are not beings with superior brains. One comes to quite the opposite conclusion when one studies their words and actions carefully. It soon becomes obvious, however, that they are merely performing actions, and saying things that reflect the needs of the Capitalist class.

We, the working class, with our wages, salaries, fees, and commissions, are really quite clever. We run a complicated, world-wide economic system, from top to bottom. But then we cease to be clever. We give the bulk of the wealth we create and distribute to the small minority who own the means of wealth production—the land, factories, railways, etc.

Friends, let us be really clever, and make a study of the social system under which we live. Let us all discover what a pleasant world to live in this can be, if we give leaders of all types the sack, and start producing wealth for the benefit of all mankind, instead of the profit of a few.

Contact your local Socialist Party Branch, and join their Discussion Group. Knowledge is the answer—knowledge of our present economic system. Then, and then only, can we change it, to the advantage of all.

When we say "Socialist Party" we mean just that. The Labour Party and Communist Party will use pseudo-Socialist language, but they do not stand for Socialism—merely the reform, or adjustment, in some way or another, of the Capitalist system. You cannot reform a bad egg—you throw it in the dustbin. The same applies to Capitalism—it will never be of any use to you.

E. L. McK.

SHOULD IRISH WORKERS SUPPORT THE I.R.A.?

With the recurrence of I.R.A. activity, attention is again focussed on the "Irish Question." The familiar tragedy of young workers dying for "The Cause" is again being re-enacted.

There are those who would tell us that as Irish workers we must be in the vanguard of the "National Struggle." Coming from the I.R.A. this means that we should join that organisation, procure arms, and train ourselves in their use. If called on, they say, we will attack the armed hirelings of the State, regardless of whether or not we fall in the fray, dangle on the hangman's rope, or find ourselves condemned to long years of imprisonment. The militant Republican assures us that we owe it to "our" country; that we must be prepared to sacrifice everything for "The Cause."

Now if a man considers "The Cause" (either that of the "Republic" or of "Ulster"), to be worthy of his, or his comrades', blood, then surely its social implications, in relation to the position in society of its protagonists, must warrant much careful consideration.

To think rationally on these matters it is necessary at the outset, to divest ourselves of all will-o-the-wisp notions; all airy legends of the past. We must leave the mythical Ireland of Echoing Glensides and green-clad columns of valiant men, and return to the earthy Ireland of a million-odd slum-dwellers, of 130,000 unemployed, of mass immigration, of T.B. and other poverty-diseases, and of thousands be-devilled by the candour of their wage-packets.

Yes, fellow-workers, this is the Ireland we know; surely the logical starting-point for our researches.

The Real Struggle

Our purpose is to show both the "Nationalist" worker, and his "Unionist" counterpart, that the struggle "for" or "against" the Border does not materially affect his lot as a worker; that the "freedom" much-talked of on both sides, is but the right of a minority class (the Capitalists) to exploit the mass of the people. We would make bold to assert that the Border is but the bastard child of the sectional interests of Capitalism in this country, and that the real struggle of the workers, in Ireland, North and South—as elsewhere in the world—should be against that more evil border that divides the workers from the Capitalists.

Sinn-Feinn

To the Republican, Sinn-Feinn are hallowed words, indeed; but the workers of Ireland have nothing for which to revere this organisation. It is worthy of note that when formed in 1905 its demands went no further than the claim for recognition of Ireland as a separate Kingdom, *hereditary to the British Crown*, with "King, Lords and Commons for Ireland."

Sinn-Feinn represents the demands of Irish Capitalism, and the primary purpose of its struggle was to free the native Capitalist class from the yoke of its English competitors. It is true that lip-service was paid to a "National Re-awakening," but dare our masters ever reveal their true intent?

In the bitter struggle which raged in Ireland in the years 1919—1922 the workers, as always, were called upon to give their blood in the cause of "Mother Ireland!" With the culmination of that struggle, and the ensuing Civil War, the Irish worker was faced again with the reality of existence under Capitalism. On public buildings, police barracks, etc., the Tricolour proudly fluttered, and street names began to appear in Irish. The lot of the wage-slave, however, was no better than before—even if he was a hero returned. The proud Tricolour flying over the Labour Exchanges was cold comfort to the mass of unemployed workers. The Irish and British Capitalists still loafed idly on the profit, rent and interest, extracted from the Irish workers.

Some will assert that, at least, the British Army had been driven from part of the national territory; certainly the Irish farm workers of the period, who went on strike for better wages and living conditions, knew this to be true—for it was the new Irish Army which the new Irish Government used against them!

Yes, the British were gone; but they were not too long out of Dublin when the new Irish Postmaster-General called on them to send "blacklegs" to help him break the strike of Post Office workers in 1922.

We have not digressed on the "principle" of "freedom"; neither, we are sure, did the thousands of unemployed in 1926 when they heard "their" Irish Government disown them with the callous declaration that unemployment was no concern of the State.

It is true that the sea-green incorruptables among the Republicans maintained that this was but mock freedom. Their indignation, however, was not because the lot of the worker was as before, but because the Six Ulster Counties were still "unfree."

They need not have worried, for though the workers of Northern Ireland still existed under the Union Jack,

their conditions were similar to those of their class-brothers in the new Irish Free State. The record of both States, and their respective Governments, is one of callous disdain for the lot of the working-class. Both are the handmaidens of Capitalism, and are, consequently, bent to the will of Capital.

The Lot of the Worker

The life of a worker, after he has received whatever education Capitalism deems necessary to equip him as an efficient wage-slave, starts with the search for a job. In Ireland, North and South, with an aggregate total of 130,000 unemployed, this is no mean task, indeed! In most instances the childhood dream of "... I'm going to be — when I grow up" goes by the board (unless the child, for morbid reasons, wants to be a policeman—for which there seems to be a constant demand in Ireland!). Capitalism does not cater to our talents, much less our whims.

On finding a job the young worker becomes acquainted with the reality of the class-struggle: on the one side the Masters with the porridge—on the other the Olivers, perpetually with just enough to "keep body and soul together," and only occasionally with enough courage to ask for more.

Whether you are paid wages or salary, you depend for your living upon selling your mental and physical abilities to an employer. There exists a constant struggle between you and your employer over your wages and conditions. Never would you dare to think that as wealth is produced from the resources of nature, by the application of human labour-power, it should wholly belong to those who, as a social class, produce it.

In other words, you accept the class ownership of society; you are prepared to let a minority class (the CAPITALISTS) own and control the means whereby you live. As a consequence of their favoured position these Capitalists can live in any part of the world they choose; they can sell, barter, or gamble away, the VERY MEANS WHEREBY YOU LIVE, AND THE NATIONALITY OF THE NEW OWNER IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.

Such an economic set-up makes nonsense of the claims made by Republicans, Unionists, or any other political party, that the people can control their own destinies, by raising this flag, or lowering that. The problems that beset us in Ireland to-day do not originate in our capacity for colour appreciation, in the qualities of Green and Orange. They are problems inherent in the Capitalist system—that system which has the blessing of both Governments in Ireland; that system which would continue to afflict us if the I.R.A. concluded a successful struggle to-morrow.

The Socialist Solution

In Ireland, North and South, we live to-day within the framework of the Capitalist system, and this decadent system would still obtain if we lived in an All-Ireland Republic. "Freedom" for the broad masses of the people, under Capitalism, is but the freedom to choose between wage-slavery and starvation. The English, French, American or Russian workers, with "their own" national governments, are no more free than we in Ireland. Capitalism, with its wages-system, and its class structure, is the common enemy; our common weapon is Socialist knowledge.

To us of the working-class, Capitalism means the continuation of all the rotten, miserable conditions under

which the mass of the people suffer. No amount of reforming can change the basic nature of the system, and its effects are not mollified by a flag. It matters not which party administers Capitalism, whether it is Republican, Unionist, Labour or Communist. Each may apply the screw of policy; bless it, curse it, nationalise or de-centralise; the effects, as far as the working-class are concerned, are the same—poverty, insecurity, slums, ignorance, depressions, and wars.

WE Socialists affirm that there is but one solution to the problems confronting the working-class; that solution is SOCIALISM. By Socialism we mean the common ownership and democratic control of the means of production (the factories, land, mills, mines, transport, etc.), by, and in the interests of, the whole community, without any distinction whatsoever. No wages system, no

exchange, no buying and selling, but instead, the application of the principle; from each according to his ability; to each according to his needs. That is Socialism, and the way out for the workers of Ireland, and the world.

When Can We Have Socialism?

One of the objective conditions necessary to the establishment of Socialism already exists; viz., the development of the machinery of production to the point necessary for supplying the needs of humanity in a free society. The second objective condition depends on us of the working-class: it is a readiness to understand the social implications of Socialism, to accept them, and consequently, desire to make the change to a Socialist society.

And when we do desire to make the change, NO POWER IN THE WORLD CAN STOP US!

R. MONTAGUE.

HOW TO ATTRACT WORKERS

By a Steel Magnate

STEEL and tinplate manufacturing in S. Wales has travelled a long way from those early times when the densely wooded valleys resounded with the blow of the hammering forges busily flattening iron into plates to the continuous strip rolling mill of today. Then the industry was in the hands of small private owners, today it has emerged into a mammoth combine employing tens of thousands of workers. Through it all, the role of the worker has remained the same. Despite changes in processes—from charcoal to coke; Bessemer to Siemens; hammer to rolls; dipping to electrolytic tinning—the workers status is still that of one who owns no part in this enterprise; remaining, as of old, a seller of labour power.

On the outskirts of Llanelli there is to be seen an old school house—1850—built by the owners of a local tinplate works for the tuition of employees' children. We can well imagine that the curriculum was "well laced" with admonitions, such as submissiveness and respect for the "master" and, of course, the parson. Today, of course, as in industry, education has been centralized and otherwise "nationalized" so that both the old school and the old steel and tinplate works have had their day.

Nowadays, Llanelli boasts the most modern tinplate strip mill in Europe, if not in the world; built by the Steel Co. of Wales, an amalgamation of a number of smaller companies. The circle, it seems, is now complete. Beginning with the introduction of the tinning process brought to this country by Yarranton, who spied on the German method; having a second great phase with the laying of the foundations of the Margam Works in 1915 (this time with the aid of German prisoners of war—forced labour?). Today, the Steel Company of Wales is a giant of the tinplate world.

Nevertheless, the worker has still to be reckoned with and so we find that the Steel Company of Wales is as keen to educate the working class as were its predecessors in the little school house not five miles away from where the present magnificent factory now stands.

A typical example has come our way recently.

Sir Ernest Lever, Chairman of the mammoth Steel Co. of Wales, some time ago, delivered a speech to the Cardiff branch of the Institute of Industrial Administration, which was considered (presumably by Sir Ernest

and his fellow executives) to be so good, that copies were distributed free to employees of the Company. We have read the document and feel that it deserves to be answered.

Sir Ernest, in a text of 10 pages, does not mention "Capitalism" or "Capitalists," though he does state that individuals "should . . . be able to make a little financial profit for themselves." This appears to be a masterly understatement to say the least, from a man whose undertaking has assets of £99 million, with a profit of £14.3 millions.

Sir Ernest begins by expounding the necessity for good management and illustrates it by giving homely examples such as that of the housewife. In this way he discusses the subject on familiar grounds with the reader as a preliminary to leading him along to a more "academic" plane. Having, he hopes, achieved some measure of agreement first he goes on to say that though Administration is not an "occult art," managers are "born and not made" (page 1). Throughout the pamphlet he plugs the necessity for leadership and the glorious rewards that lie in store for those who, like himself presumably, are born to lead (not forgetting the implication that you, too, the reader, may possess these hidden qualities).

It appears that Capitalist Administration, together with its attendant industrial methods such as "speed ups," etc., have been grossly maligned by workers and the well known "Time and Motion" study is really nothing more than what the dear old lady meant when she referred to "using her head to save her legs." We, of course, know that whereas the old lady meant *her* head, and *her* legs. Sir Ernest means *your* head and legs and the *Steel Co.'s* profits.

He then dips into history and refers to the Craft Guild System to show the rewards won by the apprentice by obeying implicitly his master's wishes and instructions and bemoans the fact that the modern worker has lost such humility (p. 10 and 11). Sir Ernest should be told that under the Guild System the apprentice hoped—and usually did—become a Master Craftsman himself; that the Master did indeed command some respect by being a

(Continued on page 73)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

MAY



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THORNEYCROFT'S BUDGET AND YOURS

BUDGETS and Budget speeches follow more or less regular patterns year after year. First it is the deep gloom type—"We are on the brink of disaster and only a desperate effort will save us." This is normally followed by the "don't rock the boat" type—"if we keep on a steady course we shall make it"; and a year later by the "let us rejoice, prosperity is round the corner and we can afford a few tax reductions." In the fourth year it starts again on gloom and disaster.

Thorneycroft and Gaitskell

The budget this year is type number two. The last budget of the Labour Government, introduced by Mr. Gaitskell in April, 1951, was type number 1. It put up income tax, levied another 4½d. a gallon on petrol, increased entertainment tax on cinema seats, introduced charges for spectacles and false teeth, and stepped up some purchase tax rates. On the other side it raised the marriage and child allowances for income tax and increased old age pensions from 26s. to 30s. for single persons and from 42s. to 50s. for married couples.

Certain features turn up every year whether the Chancellor is from the Dalton, Cripps, Gaitskell team or from the Tories, Butler, Macmillan, Thorneycroft. One is the eternal nagging of the workers to work harder and not press for higher wages, coupled with the Government's solemn pledge to keep down the cost of living. The other constant feature of budgets is that the Chancellor sorrowfully regrets that his limited resources prevent him from pleasing everybody as he would have liked to do; while the Opposition screams that he has wickedly and wantonly neglected all the really deserving cases and if only they were in office it would be a very different story.

Hope Springs Eternal

By now it might have been expected that budgets would have been seen in their true proportions, but, as the poet Pope wrote 200 years ago, "Hope springs eternal in the human breast," and every year there is the same wave of excitement and curiosity about what the Chancellor will produce from his little red box. Pope, who was cynical, could have had this budget-fever in mind in his second line, "Man never is, but always to be blessed," for in truth, for the mass of the population the hope that some day a Chancellor will do something really nice for them is the purest illusion. The little differences that budget policy make one way or the other to them are trivial compared with the worker's everyday problem of his wages and what they will buy. Governments come and go and budgets let out a little there and take in a little here, but no Government ever urges the workers to fight for higher wages, always the opposite. And the big things go on unchanged from one generation to another. The rich minority still own almost everything that matters in the country we live in, and it is they, as company shareholders, who stand to gain when prices go up and wage increases are denied under the Tory-Labour policy of wage restraint.

Low Prices and Low Taxation?

But it must not be thought that because high prices bring their hardship that a remedy could be found in low prices and low taxation. Prices and taxes were far lower before the war than they are now but workers' wages did not buy any more. Each pound note bought more, but there were correspondingly fewer notes in the wage packet. Workers, the great majority of the population, live by selling their energies to an employer and whether prices are high or low the struggle over the selling price (wages or salaries) goes on. The employers, including the boards of the nationalised industries, try always to pay as little as possible. Less interest in the vote-catching manoeuvres of Chancellors and more attention to the struggle for higher wages would be a better attitude for the workers to take.

Another Social System

But this, though the more fruitful policy, still does not lead anywhere; and that is why the Socialist Party exists. And we must repeat for the benefit of those who do not yet know it that Socialism is quite different from the aim of other organisations. Socialists are not trying to carry out an improved Labour Party programme.

The elements of the problem are simple. Nine people out of ten live frugally and with little to hope for, on wages that never leave any worth-while margin beyond necessities. And the social system we live in does not even produce enough consumer goods to satisfy reasonable human needs; nor will it ever do so. At present the means of production and distribution—land, factories, transport systems, etc., are owned by the propertied minority and used by them to make profit out of the sale of the products. Goods are not produced solely for use but for profit, and national groups, coming into conflict through rivalries about markets and trade routes (like the Suez Canal), and sources of raw material (Middle East oil), are all forced into their costly and inhuman armament schemes and H-bomb tests.

The Socialist aim is to get to the root cause of these evils of poverty and war by changing the basis of the social system so that things would be produced not for

sale and profit but solely for the use of mankind. Only by this can war and poverty be abolished, and along with them class and national rivalries and hatreds.

Fantastic! say the thoughtless opponents of Socialism,

HOW TO ATTRACT WORKERS—(continued from page 71)

"Master of his Craft" from whom one learned; that today the worker, by and large, does not and cannot hope to become the master: that masters are not masters in the sense that they are "master craftsmen" or are otherwise imbued with extraordinary talents—occult or otherwise: that they exist as masters simply by their control over the means of life with power to employ members of the working class in the laboratory, office, and workshop as happens in his, and every other industrial concern.

Perhaps the biggest "whopper" in a speech that is full of them is the statement that once a worker becomes a charge-hand or foreman, he is on his way to becoming a member of the Capitalist Class! "If you ask me when the employee becomes an employer . . . I suppose the answer is when he reaches the top grade in the employee scale" (page 4). We notice that such a staggering statement demands a careful "suppose" from an otherwise authoritative spokesman of Capitalism. For our part, we are staggered to think that the "rags to riches" view is still held to be true together with the view that an employee—even a highly paid one—is tantamount to being a Capitalist.

Sir Ernest, drawing to the end of his speech, goes on to say that "in a properly conducted industry there should be no antagonism between workers and employer" (page 6). Of course this is the situation earnestly desired by the Capitalist Class and if the workers follow Sir Ernest's advice this is the situation they will find themselves in (providing that in the meantime they lose their sanity, self respect and sense of logic). We, of course, cannot see it happening because in a system of society where there exists an antagonism of interests—on the one hand

including supporters of the Labour Party. All great social advances of the past, including the abolition of chattel slavery and serfdom, have appeared to be fantastic until they came about.

exploitation for profit and on the other the sale of labour power, strife is inevitable and willy-nilly, the Capitalist Class must wield the big stick now as they have always done if they are to remain in business even though Sir Ernest implies that though Capitalists were once bad, they are no longer so (page 6).

As we said at the beginning, Sir Ernest nowhere mentions "Capitalists" or "Capitalism," so we have had to do it for him. He confines the whole of his argument to "workers" and "management." His great aim appears to be to prove the necessity for "Leadership."

We know that the time has come when men can conduct their lives—socially and economically—without boards of directors. We know because we see the Capitalist Class running industry by purchasing the brains and muscle of the working class. When Sir Ernest says "our survival is at stake" he means, of course, the survival of the Capitalist System. We are not in the least interested in its survival, rather the opposite. Under his system our survival is always "at stake." He cannot point out any period when it was not so.

We suggest that Sir Ernest or any other spokesman for Capitalism, when next they decide to write "homilies for homely working men" really get down to it and tell us what, in their view, are the benefits of Capitalism for the working class.

And we don't want to be told that the answer lies in the steel company's recent offer of shares on special terms for their workers. This, an editorial in the *Western Mail*, says, is intended to give them the idea that they "will have a real stake in the company" (4/3/57). The real purpose—and cheap at the price—is to make the workers more docile wage slaves.

W. BRAIN.

ODDS AND ENDS

The Workers' Paradise in Russia

When a Communist or Communist-dominated delegation visits the Soviet Union they generally publish a report containing much praise and wonderment at the marvels of the Moscow Underground, the Kremlin Palace, the Church of St. Basil, and the new Moscow University building; but they say very little about the life—and living conditions—of the ordinary workers and peasants of Russia. When a non-Communist delegation visits the Soviet Union the position is often reversed.

Last year an official Mineworkers' delegation went to Russia. They have just published their report, summarised in the *Manchester Guardian* (15/3/57). They visited Moscow and a number of other towns, where they found that "an average of sixteen people are housed in a living space equal to a British council house."

They report that hours of work exceed those worked in the mining industry in Britain; and "women in the Soviet Union are in many cases required to do work that is the hardest of manual work—to work in the pits, to do the heaviest types of jobs, including the handling of heavy materials and the mixing of concrete on the surface."

And this the Communists call "Socialism." Some Socialism!

Smash 'em up!

Socialists have always claimed that things are not produced to satisfy people's needs, or to last long—if it can be helped. Most things today are cheap and shoddy. But if it was not for the fact that things are produced primarily for profit, some things if desired, could last virtually for ever. For example, *The New Scientist* (14/3/57) brings us an interesting story about glass—and tableware.

A leading glass manufacturer is producing some tableware which is very strong: plates can be crashed together like cymbals, and nails knocked into wood with the bottom of a glass with little or no damage done. But, continues the *New Scientist*, even stronger glasses and plates could be produced. But this would be uneconomical for the producers.

During the last war drinking glasses used by the American marines had a life of only seven trips to and from the kitchen. A specially strengthened glass was then

produced which lasted nearly one hundred trips. But, alas, the manufacturers found this unprofitable. Eventually, a glass was made toughened only round the rim which lasted an average of twenty-three trips. Such are the workings of our present society. A sane society would produce glassware—and everything else—solely for people's use, because they wanted it; and only the best would be made.

The Perversion of Science

It has often been claimed that scientific discovery and development is misused and perverted in our modern capitalist society. The following passage from *The New Scientist* (14/3/57) bears this out.

"In Europe, the search for better navigational methods arose from the desire for trading and from the warfare that ensued. Harrison's famous chronometer, which he perfected in the eighteenth century, was made in order to win an Admiralty prize of £20,000 for a method of determining longitude at sea. Even today progress in navigation is usually to meet military needs, and now it is the development of guided missiles which is throwing up the commercial navigation of the future."

Calypsos Next?

According to the people who are supposed to know—in Archer Street and Fleet Street—Rock 'n' Roll is on the way out, and the Calypso is in. But, so far, those who have cashed in on "Rock"—Tommy Steele, Winnie Atwell and others—are still "coining the loot," and very few Calypsos have been heard yet on the radio. This writer does not think that the Calypso will be such a money-maker as Rock 'n' Roll with its simpler beat and lyric, its noise and gimmicks. Anyway, if the Calypso is going to take the place of Rock 'n' Roll it will have to be "cleaned up" a bit, since many of its lyrics are hardly suitable for the B.B.C., or the record companies. For example, "Chinese Children Calling Me Daddy":—

"Since I am small I am living with women
And all I can get from them is false children.
Some with blue eyes and some like Chinese,
Any kind of child my girl make she stick me.
But I'm waiting on her patiently.
It's about ten months now she ain't kissed me.
And you know the bold-faced woman is telling me.
Any kind of child that born in my house, I'm the daddy.
I'm so ashamed I don't tell nobody
Chinese children calling me daddy.
You know my mother does want to beat me when
Chinese children calling me daddy.
For I black as jet and she just like Tar Baby, still
Chinese children calling me daddy.
Left, right, in front and behind,
Chinese children calling me daddy."

For the time being it looks as though we shall be stuck with Elvis Presley's *Hound Dog* or Bill Haley's *Don't Knock the Rock*. There's more money in it; and it won't upset anyone's moral susceptibilities!

The Church and Socialism

In Britain only about 10 per cent. of the population regularly go to Church, although many more say they

believe in some sort of a god or Creator, whereas in the United States about 60 per cent. are Churchgoers. The American workers, it seems, are more superstitious than their British counterparts. But even in Britain, one Church—the Catholic Church—claims 3,000,000 members (including the backsliders?). All the various Christian churches and sects oppose Socialism, but the Catholic Church is possibly the most vociferous in its opposition (and misrepresentation) of Socialism.

In a pamphlet called *Socialisation*, and "published with the authority of the Archbishop and Bishops of the Catholic Church of Australia," we are told that "Socialism, in its strict sense, is a theory which advocates that the State should take over and operate the entire machinery of production, distribution and exchange." That this statement is a complete lie from beginning to end does not worry our Catholic Bishops and Archbishops. For the information of any Catholic who may read this column, Socialism means the common possession of the means of life; an absence of a state apparatus, and no machinery, or means of exchange.

Man will no longer pray for his daily bread; he will just make it and consume what he requires!

It is not only the Catholic Church which propagates the figment that State ownership of the means of production is Socialism. Political parties, such as the Labour and Communist Parties, also make the same claim. The Communist Party, which, when it suits, boasts of its support of the theories of Marx and Engels, is perhaps the most shamefaced. For did not Engels explode this hoary old idea for all to read. In his book, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* (which all workers should read), he writes:—

"But the transformation . . . into State ownership does not do away with the capitalistic nature of the productive forces . . . The modern State, no matter what its form, is essentially a capitalist machine, the state of the capitalists, the ideal personification of the total national capital. The more it proceeds to the taking over of productive forces, the more does it actually become the national capitalist, the more citizens does it exploit. The workers remain wage-workers—proletarians. The capitalist relation is not done away with. It is rather brought to a head. But, brought to a head, it topples over. State-ownership of the productive forces is not the solution of the conflict, but concealed within it are the technical conditions that form the elements of that solution" (pp. 71-72).

With the establishment of Socialism the State dies out. "State interference in social relations becomes, in one domain after another, superfluous, and then dies out of itself; the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and by the conduct of processes of production" (pp. 76-77).

"PEN."

CORRECTION

In the April *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, the author of *The Catholic Church Against The Twentieth Century*, the author was referred to as Rose Manhattan; it should, of course, be Avro Manhattan.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS



May Day, 1957. Once more the Party is making a special propaganda effort, this year on *Sunday, 5th May*. In London there will be several outdoor meetings, and Birmingham, Glasgow and Nottingham will also have afternoon and evening outdoor meetings. A May Day Rally will be held at Denison House, London, in the evening, commencing at 7 p.m., when the speakers will be Comrades Ivimey and Wilmott. Further details of all meetings are elsewhere in this issue.

Meeting on Strikes. At very short notice the Propaganda Committee arranged a public meeting at Denison

CAPPUCCINO, SKIFFLE AND SPAGHETTI

FIFTY or sixty years ago this writer's grandfather spent six out of seven evenings a week in a public house. And most working men did the same. Today, many pubs. are almost empty from Monday to Saturday. This is partly due to the fact that more men stay at home, watching the T.V., listening to the radio or reading, and partly due to a change in drinking habits. What, then, do we drink today when we don't drink beer? And where do we go?

Coffee Bars

Millions of gallons of tea are drunk in restaurants and roadside cafés. And soft drinks like "coke" and milk shakes are sold in the now declining milk bars. But neither the roadside *caff* nor the milk bar can take the place of the pub. The public house was—and to a lesser extent still is—a meeting place for working men, and women, after a day's work. But neither the café nor the milk bar can be that, though many milk bars and some restaurants boast of a juke box. The milk bar, with its high chrome stools and numerous mirrors, is no place for social drinking.

But during the last few years a new kind of place—with "atmosphere"—has come into being. It is the Espresso coffee bar.

About five years ago an Italian dentist who came to Britain, so we are told, to sell mouth-mirrors, so hated British coffee that he introduced Espresso coffee machines, which, by steam pressure, pump water through ground coffee to make a fresh cup of coffee for each cup. When the coffee is topped with the foam of milk heated by steam, it is called *Cappuccino*. Within a year, hundreds of Espresso coffee bars had sprung up in London and elsewhere.

In most coffee bars the lights are low—very low; the

House on Sunday, 7th April. Comrades R. Critchfield and J. D'Arcy spoke on "Another General Strike?" Although the audience was not as large as usual at such meetings, the meeting was a lively one and after both speakers had made a contribution, several members of the audience put some good questions and took part in discussion. Some had taken part in the recent strike. A collection of five pounds was taken up during the interval.

Conference will be over by the time this issue is printed, although the *STANDARD* will have gone to the printers beforehand. Conference news will be reported, therefore, in the June issue.

The May S.S. Sales Drive. During this month many Branches are undertaking an extensive programme of canvassing the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*. Plans are also in hand for a special drive on May Day.

Last year over 6,000 *Standards* were sold, and this year we are hoping to do even better. All members are especially asked to do all they can to help in canvassing, contacting newsagents, selling at outdoor meetings and by personal contact, etc. The Literature Sales Committee will be pleased to give any further information required.

PLEASE SEE LIST OF CANVASSING ARRANGEMENTS ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE!
P.H.

walls are covered with Picasso-like murals, and the waitresses look like Marilyn Monroe or Jayne Mansfield! And all for ninepence a cup! This was the place that a fellow and his girl friend could sit in for hours on end—for a few shillings. But the coffee house proprietors soon found that coffee on its own or with the occasional *gateau* did not bring in the profits that they expected. Groups of working-class teenagers drinking possibly two or three cups of *Cappuccino* in an evening was of little use to them.

New and different clients had to be catered for. Coffee and *gateau* was not enough.

Spaghetti and Steak

A number of Espresso coffee bars began to add spaghetti to their menus; some came into existence as restaurants and coffee bars. Some are now licensed, and sell both coffee and spirits.

Another coffee bar "gimmick" is the skiffle group—three, four or more "musicians," playing guitars, home-made string basses, etc., and singing, with pseudo-American accents, folk songs of Tennessee and the Deep South. A cover charge is made for such entertainment.

At present, Espresso coffee bars—plus spaghetti, steak, brandy and skiffle—are booming, but to a large extent they are changing. At first the Bloomsbury "intellectuals" and the Bohemians with their sandals and corduroy trousers frequented them, and then later the more typical working-class youngsters, but now many coffee bars cater exclusively for the upper-income types; others are squeezing the poorer group out with their three cups of coffee per evening.

Espresso is becoming *bourgeois*. Earls Court moves into Mayfair.

"PEN."

EMPTYING THE SEA BY BUCKET

FOR those misguided people who like going in for marches, demonstrations, signing petitions and lobbying M.P.s. Capitalism sees to it that they are kept busy, even if they achieve nothing.

The fact is there is so much wrong, so many objectionable things taking place all the time, that the marching enthusiasts are bound to miss quite a lot. Apart from this they suffer from two fatal faults, first the objects of their marching are only effects and do not touch the fundamental cause, secondly, the fundamental cause being the class ownership of the means of production, marching is not the way to remove it.

It must not be taken from the above that demonstrations can serve no purpose of importance to the working-class. As a means of rallying support for wage claims, drawing attention to grievances and mustering a certain amount of solidarity during strikes they are useful. But we are concerned here purely with demonstrations as a means of altering the course of capitalism or eradicating one at a time the problems which arise because of capitalism; even in the sphere of wages etc., the effect is short-lived for the conflict between exploiter and exploited goes on interminably and will do so until the exploited understand Socialism.

One of the many things which happen every day under capitalism was the announcement that plans are being made to make troops carry a drug kit to inject themselves against "the latest poison gases" (*Daily Express*, January 30th, 1957). How are the reform marchers to approach this particular piece of capitalism's ugliness? It is their way to take it in isolation from the system as a whole, this is the reformist approach to everything, i.e., to seek solutions within capitalism, to housing problems, high rents, redundancy, slumps, poverty and wars each on its own without bothering to find out that all the problems have a common cause and can only be solved not bit by bit, but altogether, by the removal of this cause. Faced with the drug kit as an isolated proposition, would they march for it or against it or would there be a division in their ranks—some marching for, some against? Considering the proposition more closely we find these are the points to be taken into account. First, there is no challenge to the existence of capitalism, so they all accept the need for armies. Then, since it is a fact that nerve gases have been stockpiled, which do they prefer, troops to go unprotected against these deadly gases or do they submit to the need for soldiers to carry "a dangerous

dose of the drug belladonna?" Of course, outraged by our criticism, our marching reformers might shout "ban the gases and the drugs" (there's a nice slogan for them), but what of the efforts to ban the "A" and "H" bombs? The turbulent sea of capitalism floods in upon them. If this or that weapon were "banned" there is no way of guaranteeing it would not be used, for the politicians who can "justify" their production can surely "justify" their use on any number of pretences. And even without "A" and "H" bombs and nerve gases the workers of the world could have a glorious time slaughtering each other by millions with "conventional" weapons of all kinds.

Within capitalism what can be done? The answer is bluntly that, squirm as they may, while the world remains under the present system, the workers will continue to bear the brunt of it.

While cancer and polio research still rely on voluntary contributions, scientists like Penny are designing "H" bombs, and Dr. H. Cullumbins, one of the chief scientists of the Chemical Defence Station at Parton, had this to say about the effects of the drug injections: "A large proportion of the men may collapse and the military efficiency of the remainder may be negligible, especially in hot conditions. But that is preferable to death from nerve gas poisoning."

From our standpoint as Socialists, taking the interests of the world working-class as our guide, there is no proposition which simply involves re-arranging capitalism that can make one arrangement "preferable" to another. Whatever the arrangement, the workers are going to continue being exploited for the profit of an idle class, insecurity will continue to be the lot of the useful, crises will continue to arise while commodity production, world markets and profits remain, and wars with all this bestiality will continue to arise. It therefore remains that the one object of any real use that the world's workers should devote their efforts to, is the establishment of Socialism. This means they must understand that capitalism cannot be made to work in their interests by adjustments here and there. From this understanding they must build the political organisation to send delegates to Parliament for the task of making the means of production common-property so that society can then proceed from this basis of a classless world to organise production for use and eliminate all wasteful and harmful production, so that mankind in peace eternal be able to enjoy the fruits of their labours to the full.

H. B.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MAY DAY

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, May, 1907.)

THE First of May of our own times is in direct contrast to the May-day of old. The old festival had an organic connection with the daily work of the people. The old games, the decorations of greenery and flowers, the bringing home of the May; these reflected the joy of all at the

awakening of nature, at the promise of the crops to come, and at the growing light and warmth of the season. Today, however, agriculture has ceased to occupy the premier place and is consequently no longer reflected in the holidays of the people... agriculture itself is, indeed, with intensive culture and the growing use of machinery, fast becoming an industry. The increase in culture under

shelter and the rapidity of communication with other climes also diminish greatly the importance of the seasons, and tend to complete the change wrought by the rise of manufacture in the significance of the First of May.

The First of May, though nearly all its old associations are forever lost, has now a new and deeper meaning. It comes to the toilers as seed time for the harvest to come;

a seed time of fraternity and organisation with their fellows, for the harvest of deliverance from wage slavery. May-day yet retains a portion of its old significance; it is still a festival of the people, of those who work...

The First of May is then a worker's festival, a pledge of fraternity and internationalism, an awakening to the social mission of the working class.

IS CAPITALISM REALLY CHANGING?

IF the parties of reform cannot call the tune to Capitalism they can at least call it by fancy names. Tories and Liberals rather like the sound of "The People's State," "Progressive Industrialism," or simply "The Welfare State." With unconscious irony the Labour Party in this never-never or hire purchase age, refer to it as yet a further instalment towards getting Socialism, while the ingredients for their recipes are the same each rival party seeks to sell its programme as a proprietary brand and the label assumes greater significance than the contents. Word magic then becomes an essential feature of political art and future historians may note that the differences among the reform parties were at bottom semantic differences.

Last Days of Pompeii

Mr. Strachey's book, "Contemporary Capitalism," is yet another verbal variation of the current situation. Dramatically he names it, the last stage of capitalism. For all its relevance to actuality he could have called it, "The Last Days of Pompeii." Mr. Strachey deals with capitalism in terms of its symptoms, not the malady; which is as futile as a physician treating measles in terms of its spots or malaria in terms of its shudders and shivers.

Mr. Strachey in diagnosing the body politic and economic discovers by certain signs that capitalism has changed, is changing, and will continue to change—for the better. Mr. Strachey lists the signs as evidence for this, in the separation of ownership from management—which we shall deal with in a separate article—the increase in State activity, the appearance of the Welfare State and even the new method of setting out the national accounts. If all this is coupled with the atrophy of competition, which, says Mr. Strachey, is the essential regulating and controlling mechanism of capitalism, then a new kind of capitalism is being produced. A new kind of capitalism which in Mr. Strachey's view, it will in the foreseeable future be an abuse of language to call capitalism. It is the ending of what he calls unrestricted competition that is the basis of, to use another term of his, the mutation of capitalism.

Capitalism and Competition

Mr. Strachey by treating competition as the essence of capitalism is able by invincible logic to establish the proposition that as unrestricted competition is no longer with us, neither is capitalism, or at least only its last stage. The weakness of identifying capitalism with laissez-faire, i.e., individualistic competition and an absolute minimum of State interference in industry is that such a state of affairs corresponded only with the coming to maturity of English capitalism, while the development of capitalism in England went through a "free trade" phase, in the U.S.A. it went through an opposite phase—protection again in Germany,

Japan, Italy, etc., the early stages of capitalism so widely departed from the classic English development as to say that a laissez-faire free trade capitalism was peculiar to England. We might add that Soviet capitalism has never known anything remotely connected with laissez-faire.

What can be said is that laissez-faire and free trade were components of 19th century capitalist ideology, but its actual economic practice only came into operation under certain conditions. Also, if trusts, cartels, etc., are à la Mr. Strachey, evidence of a last stage capitalism, then U.S. and German capitalism must have come to it in the alleged traditional fashion of the Chinese by going through the last stage first, for such things were features of the early capitalist development of the above countries.

On historical and factual grounds it can be shown that individualistic competition and non-intervention by the State in matters industrial, although they corresponded to the growth of English capitalism were not features basic to the maturing of capitalism elsewhere. Laissez-faire and capitalism cannot then be regarded as synonymous terms. Even on purely logical grounds, Mr. Strachey is guilty of a howler unardonable in a high school student. Thus, if there is a last stage monopoly capitalism and a first stage competitive capitalism, and the species is still extant and recognisable, then competition cannot be the essence of capitalism. There must be some basic factor common to both stages.

The Nature of Capitalism

What that basic common factor is, Mr. Strachey never really attempts to explain. The nearest he gets to it is a casual observation (page 92) that "Marx showed that wealth is not due to capitalist abstinence but wealth and capital accumulate because workers produce much more than they consume." But this does not tell us what makes capitalism tick or show its essential differences from other exploitative social systems.

It is not that the worker merely produces a value over and above his own upkeep—surplus value, but that this surplus value constitutes the warp and woof of capital accumulation, and it is capital accumulation on an ever-expanding scale which is the dominant objective of the owners of capital. For capitalists the most essential thing is the magnitude of capital under their control and its most desirable characteristic the ability to expand indefinitely. The fundamental urge of capitalist society is the same now as it was in all its yesteryears.

Nor is capitalism crucially altered because owners of capital fight in the massive formation of firms, corporations and cartels instead of rushing into battle single-handed with the cut-throat sword of naked competition, as was the wont of their early and mid 19th century counterparts. Capitalism is still a battleground of rival concerns, each trying to obtain the greatest possible spoils

in their efforts to realise the greatest amount of surplus value for themselves. It is true that Agincourt was fought with bows and arrows and armed horsemen, but it was no less a battle than Stalingrad, which was fought with tanks and high explosives.

Capital accumulations have not ceased

If capital accumulation is the cardinal feature of capitalist society, then it is precisely here that Mr. Strachey should have directed his efforts, to show that capitalism is changing in some significant way. He should have sought to reveal that accumulation of wealth is no longer capital accumulation, but becoming social accumulation and that the means and instruments of wealth production are ceasing to become capital, that is, means of exploitation in the hands of individuals or groups of individuals, but were in the process of being invested in the democratic control of the community. If Mr. Strachey could have demonstrated this, then he surely would have proved that when he states that capitalism has undergone a mutation he is using the word in its correct sense. On the contrary, Mr. Strachey implicitly and at times explicitly shows that wealth accumulation still takes the form of capital accumulation.

Nor are the compulsions of capitalism any less compulsive than they were in the 19th century. The process of capital accumulation is not something over which capitalists can exercise a personal choice, to ignore it would be to invite elimination from the ranks of the owners of capital. Capitalists, and here we include management, although they are agents of capital, are not free agents. Capital is an historically conditioned form of wealth, expressed in the class ownership of the means of production and for that reason the motive and aims of the owners of capital are prescribed for them by this form of control. It is in the light of this that we are to understand Marx's statement when he says in the preface to volume one of *Capital* that "he treats of landlord and capitalist as personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class relations and interests."

Because reformist policies are themselves the outcome and implementation of capitalist development the political parties in order to justify their existence seek to rationalise this development in terms of significant changes. But it is a mistake to suppose that development as such is synonymous with change in some transformative sense. Muscles may be developed, but they are still muscles. A plant may in its life cycle undergo change of form, but it is subject to an intrinsic pattern of development. Capitalist development may modify certain features of the system, but it does not alter the essential nature of the beast, any more than sawing off the legs of a Wolfhound if it were possible would make it a Daschund. It would still remain a Wolfhound with short legs.

The acid test of Reformism

It is because the conversion of capital accumulation of wealth to social accumulation provides the acid test to any genuine change in society that Mr. Strachey's political litmus paper not only fails to turn red, but even parlour pink. In Mr. Strachey's future society there will still be class ownership of the instruments of production and hence accumulation will continue to be capital accumulation. What will be necessary will be that the rate of investment must be kept as high as possible and in that case Mr. Strachey sees no objection why the economic mechanism cannot be left in private hands. Since,

says the arch-revolutionary Strachey, the owners of the means of production or management cannot be ordered they must be induced not to let the level of investment drop. This can be achieved by public works investment and a whiff of inflation.

In Mr. Strachey's social mutation there will still exist all the characteristics of the old species, capital accumulation, private ownership, profits and wages. And so the more capitalism is changed the more it is like the same thing—only even more so.

Mr. Strachey, a little self-conscious, perhaps, that his mutation looks suspiciously like the old species writ large, implies that owners and management are becoming socialist because the profit motive is today not the only motive. But if profits are not made owners and those who constitute management will go out of business. For capitalism it remains the golden rule of success and capitalists must play the game in accordance with that rule. Whatever other motives inspire the entrepreneur they are all subordinated to that one and whatever other rules are broken that one is the one which they can least afford to break.

We are all Socialists now

Mr. Strachey puts forward the threadbare apologia that those who direct and control investment do or can play a useful social role. That their job is one of those specialised jobs they do on behalf of the community and in taking profits they are merely being recompensed for their trouble like any other workers. No doubt under Mr. Strachey's future economy, capitalists will murmur with pride and equanimity, "We are all Socialists now."

Competition as fierce as ever

Mr. Strachey, who in the matter of politics is the best second-hand dealer in the business, offers the commonplace of fifty years economic theory that competition has declined. It is an over-simplification amounting to falsification to say that price competition between the bigger concerns no longer operates. There are periods in various spheres where price stabilisation is achieved by agreements, but such agreements are temporary in character and have been broken time and time again, and so far as cartels being something new in capitalism they are almost as old as capitalism itself. In fact, the history of capitalism is replete with cartels, both national and international, coming together and falling apart.

Sometimes the conditions of the markets are such that price competition has to be resorted to. When the battle has reached exhausting limits, non-price competition, i.e. selling agencies and advertising take its place. But the antagonism between rival producers is as fierce as ever. Price competition or non-price competition are then merely forms of social antagonism inseparable from such a society as capitalism.

For someone who cannot define capitalism it is hardly to be expected that he can define Socialism. And this turns out to be so when Mr. Strachey gravely utters the nonsense that the outstanding difference between last stage capitalism and Communist societies is political rather than economic. It is the difference between democracy and dictatorship. On such a classification, Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, the Argentine, and even Spain, are nearer to "Socialism" than England.

One can only say in conclusion that the height of Mr. Strachey's absurdity is equalled only by the depth of his ignorance.

E. W.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Patrick Boylan, 115, Walkinstown Drive, Walkinstown, Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

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SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ... 11.15 a.m.—2 p.m.
3.30—6 p.m.

East Street (Walworth) May 5th 1 p.m.—2 p.m.
" 12th 11 a.m.—12 noon
" 1 p.m.—2 p.m.
" 19th 11 a.m.
" 26th 12 noon

Whitstone Pond (Hampstead) ... 11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park ... 11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Lincoln's Inn Fields ... Tuesdays & Fridays
Finsbury Pavement ... Tuesdays
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.



MAY SALES DRIVE CANVASSES

WEDNESDAY, MAY 1st.	
Meet Cuckoo Hill (Studland Road), Hanwell ...	7.30 p.m.
" Oval Station, Kennington ...	8.00 p.m.
FRIDAY, MAY 3rd.	
Meet Regal Cinema, Mare Street, Hackney ...	7.30 p.m.
" Oval Station, Kennington ...	8.00 p.m.
SUNDAY, MAY 5th.	
Meet Stonebridge Park Station ...	10.30 a.m.
" Library (nr. Manor House Station) ...	10.30 a.m.
" Regal Cinema, Mare Street, Hackney ...	10.45 a.m.
MONDAY, MAY 6th.	
Meet Finsbury Park Station ...	7.45 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, MAY 8th.	
Meet Oval Station, Kennington ...	8.00 p.m.
THURSDAY, MAY 9th.	
Meet Northolt Station ...	7.30 p.m.
FRIDAY, MAY 10th.	
Meet Hackney Town Hall ...	7.15 p.m.
" Oval Station, Kennington ...	8.00 p.m.
SUNDAY, MAY 12th.	
Meet Golders Green Station (Main Entrance) ...	10.30 a.m.
" Finsbury Park Station ...	10.30 a.m.
" Hackney Town Hall ...	10.45 a.m.
MONDAY, MAY 13th.	
Meet Finsbury Park Station ...	7.45 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, MAY 15th.	
Meet Shepherds Bush (Junction Bleomfontein Road and Uxbridge Road) ...	7.30 p.m.
" Tulse Hill ...	8.00 p.m.
FRIDAY, MAY 17th.	
Meet Odeon Cinema, Hackney Road ...	7.15 p.m.
" Tulse Hill ...	8.00 p.m.
SUNDAY, MAY 19th.	
Meet Stonebridge Park Station ...	10.30 a.m.
" Finsbury Park Station ...	10.30 a.m.
" Odeon Cinema, Hackney Road ...	10.45 a.m.
MONDAY, MAY 20th.	
Meet Finsbury Park Station ...	7.45 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, MAY 22nd.	
Meet Tulse Hill ...	8.00 p.m.
THURSDAY, MAY 23rd.	
Meet Mogden Lane, Twickenham ...	7.30 p.m.
FRIDAY, MAY 24th.	
Meet Tulse Hill ...	8.00 p.m.
" Bonner Gate, Victoria Park ...	7.15 p.m.
SUNDAY, MAY 26th.	
Meet Golders Green Station ...	10.30 a.m.
" Finsbury Park Station ...	10.30 a.m.
" Bonner Gate, Victoria Park ...	10.45 a.m.
MONDAY, MAY 27th.	
Meet Finsbury Park Station ...	7.45 p.m.
WEDNESDAY, MAY 29th.	
Meet Camberwell Green ...	8.00 p.m.
FRIDAY, MAY 31st.	
Meet Camberwell Green ...	8.00 p.m.

Canvasses will also be held in Southend and Glasgow. Particulars from Secretaries of Southend and Kelvingrove Branches.

MANCHESTER.—Comrades are urged to contact Comrade Heeley, of 12, Ingle Road, Cheadle, who will be canvassing the Wythenshaw area.

Further information from Central Literature Sales Committee at Head Office.

MAY DAY RALLY

at
DENISON HOUSE, 296 VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD,
Nr. Victoria Station

on
SUNDAY, MAY 5th, at 7 p.m.

Speakers: A. IVIMEY, E. WILMOTT

Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Benzie Road, Dundee.

EDINBURGH. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh.

OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5163.

REDHILL AND REIGATE DISTRICT—C. E. Smith, 88, Chart Lane, Reigate, Surrey.

SWANSEA—Enquiries to V. Brain, 17, Bryn a Wellen Rd., Pencool, Nr. Llanelly.

Copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD are on sale at the newspaper stands as named below. Members and sympathisers are asked to buy from these stands when possible:—

"THE BLACKSTOCK": Finsbury Park. (Sunday morning).

"PRINCES HEAD": Battersea Park Road. (Daily—mornings).

GREAT PORTLAND ST. Tube Station: (Sunday morning).

"RED LION": Kingsbury Rd., Hendon. Sunday morning).

RUSSELL Sq. Tube Station: (Daily).

SHEPHERDS BUSH Tube Station: (Daily—morning).

WIMBLEDON Stn.: (Daily—morning).

WEALDSTONE Station (Sunday morning).

KENTON Station (Sunday morning).

HAMMERSMITH—King Street. (SMITH'S (not W. H.) Newsagents).

HOLLOWAY: Paper shop, D. Johnston, Brecknock Road.

FINSBURY PARK STATION: Main paper stall.

NAG'S HEAD, HOLLOWAY: Main paper stall.

HIGHBURY CORNER: Main paper stall—station.

COLLIERS WOOD: Underground Station (Daily—morning)

HIGHBURY BARN (Paper Stall) Highbury Park, N.5.

Also from Booksellers as under:—

The New Stores, 10, Coptic Street, W.C.1.

Herbert's Cigar Stores, 39, Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1.

Callett's Bookshop, Charing Cross Road, W.1.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. May 2nd and 16th.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCELS meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m., at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (May 8th and 22nd) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, May 13th and 27th at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney. Sec.: A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak Edgware. Branch meets alternate Tuesdays, 8 p.m., May 7th and 21st, 108c, Goldhurst Terrace, Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 11, Oakfield Road, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

MANCHESTER Branch meets the first Thursday in each month (May 2nd), George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.: Sec.: J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. Phone: DIDsbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Gisleay, 17, Cotswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae" Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, Pelham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsey, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

MAY DAY, 1957

SUNDAY, MAY 5th

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

LONDON: Hyde Park ...	3 p.m. to 6.30 p.m.
Clapham Common ...	3 p.m.
Hampstead,	
White Stone Pond	11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park ...	11.30 a.m.
Walworth, East St. ...	1-2 p.m.
BIRMINGHAM: Bull Ring ...	Noon and 6 p.m.
GLASGOW: Queens Park ...	Aftern'n & Evening
NOTTINGHAM: Market Square	Aftern'n & Evening

DEBATE

S.P.G.B. v. London Anarchist Group

"SOCIALISM OR ANARCHISM"

For L.A.G. - P. Sansum

For S.P.G.B. - R. Coster

FRIDAY, 17th MAY at 7.30 p.m.

BETHNAL GREEN LIBRARY

(Bethnal Green Central Line—Buses, 8, 106, 653)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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AND THE JEWS

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

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AN INTERESTING LETTER from a reader appeared in the *Daily Mail* on 26th April of this year: interesting because it put a question that baffles most people and because nobody gave the answer.

Here is the question:—

"In these days of mechanisation it seems strange that most manufactured goods should get dearer. Our wonderful new methods are claimed to give up to ten times the results achieved by older manual methods. Can anyone explain this apparent paradox?"

It is a fair question, and the facts as stated are beyond dispute. Almost every day our newspapers carry reports of some startling increase of productivity, and alongside them announcements of higher prices. What then is the explanation of what the writer of the letter calls "this apparent paradox"? There are several factors, three of which are important. Firstly, the effects of increases of output are almost always wildly exaggerated; secondly, there are large industries in which productivity is falling; and thirdly, prices rise because it has long been government policy to take actions which inevitably raise prices. This last has by far the largest effect, sufficient to offset other changes that might otherwise lower the price level.

Governments and the Price Level

Continually since 1939 it has been the policy of successive governments, National, Labour and Tory, to inflate the currency; that is, to increase the amount of notes in circulation far beyond the amount that would have been sufficient to keep up with the growth of production, trade and population. The note issue in 1938 was under £600 million; it reached £1,400 million in 1945, and is now over £2,000 million. At one time most economists knew well what the effect on the price level is when an inconvertible currency (i.e., not freely convertible into gold) is excessively expanded: now they have forgotten or, like the politicians, prefer to turn a blind eye. Governments do this because, whatever they may say about wanting prices to fall or to keep steady, they really prefer gently rising prices and wages and profits, which give so many people the illusion of being better off. Also they wonder whether a fall in prices might mean a really big rise in unemployment, which would lose them votes.

The measure of the inflation of the currency can be seen in the fact that a gold pound, the sovereign, can be sold for three times its face value of 20/-. Another mark of inflation is the progressive fall of the pound in relation to the dollar. In 1938 the pound would exchange for 4.86 dollars. In 1940 it was reduced to 4 dollars, and in 1949 to 2.8 dollars. In 1932 the American dollar

had already been cut to about half its gold content. Some economists expect a further devaluation before very long in Britain. This inflation is then largely the cause of prices being generally at least three times what they were in 1938.

If the government wanted to do so, they could limit or reduce the amount of currency and thus stop the price rise or bring about a fall. Several governments have done this in the past, including the Russian government in 1947.

Misleading Claims about Increased Productivity

We see, then, that even if there were a big increase in productivity through the use of more efficient machinery and methods or other causes, its effect on lowering prices could be offset by the government's currency policy. But the claims of increased productivity are themselves widely misunderstood and exaggerated.

It is an elementary principle that if by some means the amount of labour required to produce an article could be reduced to half, the price could be halved, but we would expect this to take place only after the new method had become the typical one in at least a large part of the whole industry. If one firm only had possession of the new method they would not cut their price to half, but would use their favoured position to make larger profits, perhaps reducing the price a little in order to capture trade from their less efficient competitors.

But before we get to this point we have to be sure that what looks like a doubling of productivity really is what it seems. And here we are only too often presented with misleading information by newspapers that probably do not have full information (because firms rarely disclose it) and which, in any event, are more interested in sensationalism than in accuracy.

News of new machinery is usually presented in the form that some new machine attended by a small number of workers will do the work of a much larger number working by hand or with another machine. It is in this form that announcements about the power-driven coal cutters is reported; and recent examples have been the automatic factory and office machines loosely described as "automation." But though we may reasonably assume that some increase in productivity is expected, this kind of information tells us nothing at all about increased productivity. Increased productivity in the last resort means producing an article with less labour, and to know to what extent this has been achieved we need to know about *all* the labour, including that required to make and maintain the machine. Often this information is not disclosed, as is pointed out in the booklet on *Automation*, published by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.

An example a few years ago was a report that "the world's biggest signal box" had been opened by British Railways at York. In almost all the newspaper reports the item seized upon as news was that 27 men could now do the work formerly done by 70 men in a number of separate signal boxes. Doubtless the change over will in time produce some real saving of labour, but most of the Press reports omitted to state that the new box cost £500,000 (*Manchester Guardian*, 1st June, 1951). It will take a long time before the saving of the labour of 43 signalmen equals the amount of labour taken up in construction.

The coal mines are an interesting example. Astonishing claims have been made about the increased productivity expected from the use of machinery in the mines, but the annual output of coal per worker employed in the coal industry has remained practically unchanged in the years 1951 to 1956, at about 315 tons per year, compared with an output of about 330 tons a year 70 or 80 years ago; which brings us to another important factor often overlooked.

Declining Industries

The coal mines are typical of a number of industries in which the general trend is for output to fall not rise. When coal mining was in its infancy the rich seams near the surface were exploited and output was high. As these are exhausted miners have to go deeper, and poorer seams are extracted—with the result that more and more labour is required for each ton of coal. New machinery helps, but if the labour required to make the increasing amount of machinery produced in the engineering trades for the use of the coal industry is taken into account, the real fall in output is even greater than is shown by the above figures.

In an address to the Rotary Club of Los Angeles (reported in *Manchester Guardian*, 15th Feb., 1957), the chairman of the Socony Mobil Oil Company, Mr. B. B. Brewster Jennings, surveyed a number of the raw material industries and showed that what is true of coal is true of many other industries:

"... raw materials all over the world are harder and costlier to get. We have seen this very clearly in our own coal industry, in which year by year more non-productive work is needed for every ton of useful coal. For most of our raw materials the picture is much the same."

He instanced copper, the American oil industry, with more and deeper wells to produce the same output of oil, and iron ore in Canada. His conclusion was that man's ingenuity will keep up with the rapidly increasing demand for these materials, but only at the cost of more and more capital being invested to do it; which is another way of saying that more labour is required in these industries for each ton of output.

This general trend in the raw material industries shows itself in the fact that raw material prices in the last half century have risen considerably more than the rise of the prices of manufactured goods. And it explains why we so often read that industries which are known to have introduced new machines and methods which reduce the labour required in manufacture (e.g., the motor industry) nevertheless announce higher prices "because of the increased cost of raw materials."

The Real Increase of Productivity

The real increase of productivity in industry and transport, etc., as a whole is consequently not the very large amount conveyed by sensational newspaper reports, but on a much more modest scale. The Earl of Halsbury, managing director of the National Research Development Corporation, who has written much about "Automation," was merely restating the accepted view among economists who have studied this problem when, in a recent interview, he said:—

"Productivity in the United Kingdom rose at one and a half per cent. per annum in the United Kingdom for the first forty years of this century. It's now rising at three per cent. per annum, double the old rate. . ." (*Everybody's*, 16/2/57).

In America, according to the Bureau of Labour Statistics, productivity (i.e., the output per worker) in manufacturing industry rose between 1929 and 1953 by 70 per cent. As the period covered is 24 years, this means an average yearly increase of under 3 per cent. (*Times*, 18th January 1956).

Is this a gloomy view?

The real facts about productivity may be a shock to those who believe that "automation" will bring a paradise of a workless world and to those who believe that capitalism can offer a spectacular rise of the standard of living. Actually a 3 per cent. increase of productivity each year *could* double output in about 30 years, but capitalism presents another gloomy aspect, that its wars and armaments make nonsense of the increase of productivity. Almost all of the increase of productivity of British industry in this century has been swallowed up in the expenses of armaments (now nearly 10 per cent. of the national income) and in succeeding destructive wars, which in a few years can destroy the achievements

of a quarter of a century.

Socialism the Only Way to Secure the Benefits of Productivity

Socialists have the only hopeful answer to these gloomy facts of life under capitalism. Only Socialism can end war and armaments and thus stop that waste of production. Equally important, only Socialism can secure that the labour force and the materials now devoted to the financial, trading, and other activities necessary to Capitalism but needless in a Socialist system of society, can be freed for the production of useful articles and services. In this, Socialism offers the certain prospect that the output of useful articles could in short time be doubled. But this involves the abolition of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism in its place.

And, incidentally, to go back to our starting point, the problem of the writer of the letter to the *Daily Mail* will be solved in a way he has not thought of. Under Socialism prices will not be high or low; there will be no prices!

H.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Conference proceeded this year in a very business-like fashion, the Agenda was completed by 5.30 p.m. on the Sunday afternoon. On the first day forty-four delegates were present, representing twenty branches; on Saturday and Sunday the numbers were slightly less. Although the Agenda was a full one, all the items were dealt with, despite the fact that there was no Saturday morning session this year. The dance held on the Saturday was better attended than the one held last year, and a very happy evening was enjoyed by all. On Sunday a Party Rally was held, but the audience was not a very large one, and it has been suggested that the rallies should be discontinued. However, if Comrades would like to see them continued and are prepared to muster up support for them, they can easily voice their views through the branches with a view to the continuance of the Rallies.

May Day. Full details are not yet to hand (at the time of going to press), but good meetings were held in Hyde Park, in addition to the meeting in the evening at Denison House. The Literature Sales Committee will be reporting later on the special efforts made for the sale of the STANDARD.

Lewisham Branch is holding two more lectures at their Branch Room, Davenport House, Davenport Road, Rushey Green. On Monday, 3rd June, Comrade Ivimey is speaking on the RENT BILL, and on Monday, 17th June, Comrade D'Arcy is speaking on "THE COST OF LIVING." Both lectures commence at 8 p.m.

The "Daily Telegraph." In an endeavour to get the Party's case more widely known, advertisements are placed from time to time in various journals. It was considered that the "Personal Column" of the *Daily Telegraph* offered one useful medium, but both in May 1955, and again this year (the only two occasions we have approached them during recent years), they declined to accept our advertisement, thus depriving their readers of



studying views which may be new to them. This is symptomatic of the difficulty of more widely spreading the Party's case. Not only are we handicapped by lack of funds, and barred from the air by the B.B.C., but even small advertisements are liable to be banned by the consortiums which sell the news.

The advertisement they refused to accept is given below. No explanation was given, merely a curt note from the Classified Advertisement Manager (6th May, 1957): "It is regretted we are unable to accommodate the above announcement in our columns."

"It could be worth your while to investigate Socialism (as distinct from Labourism or Russian 'Communism'). Why not send for *Socialist Comment*—a reprint of several outstanding articles from the SOCIALIST STANDARD? 8d. post free. S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4."

P. H.

LETTERS FROM READERS INVITED

Our Annual Conference in April decided that a section of the SOCIALIST STANDARD be reserved for letters from readers as a regular feature. Readers are invited to send letters of comment and criticism and questions for answer. Letters should be kept as short as possible as space is limited, and the shorter the letters the larger the number that can be printed. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

HOW WELL IS THE "WELFARE STATE"?

(Continued from March SOCIALIST STANDARD).

Housing in Vienna

In the face of the general poverty of the mass of the people, any assertion that the workers are supposed to be the owners of nationalized industries is not only a mockery; it is a downright fraud and an insult to their intelligence. Even the assertion of house-owning by the workers is for the overwhelming majority nothing but an illusion. Of the 100,000 flats built by the Municipality of Vienna since 1922, not one can be claimed by the occupier to be his property. They all are owned and controlled by the share and bondholders of the Municipality and the Banks. The occupiers are there on sufferance; i.e., on condition that, and as long as they can pay the rent, the same as in all the houses belonging to private landlords or the State. Failure to meet this obligation involves the loss of the accommodation. No, "welfare" does not go so far as to make you the owner of "your" flat. While this municipal building activity may be said to be a bright spot in the jungle of the housing market, the problem remains really and truly a terrifying one.

Dr. Nuna Sailer, speaking on the social background of the problem of youth, said the whole question is marked by the indescribable housing conditions in Austria. In Vienna more than two-thirds of all flats still consist of only one room and kitchen. The larger part of the flats have not even their own water supply. There are no statistics on the number of beds in the individual households. Inspectors see appalling conditions when visiting homes. Children of four still sleep in cradles, prams or boxes, chests of drawers, trunks; two or three little stools and similar makeshifts serve as "beds." As a result of a comprehensive investigation, it was found that 12 per cent. of all children shared their parents' bed. About a tenth of them are from 14 to 18 years old.

It is obvious that apart from a lot of other evils due to such lack of dwelling space, the child cannot learn or do its homework. Bad housing conditions also lead not only to quarrels, but to a complication of the problem of youth in the family. Out of 72,000 marriages in 1949 there were 18,000 divorces. Today almost 40 per cent. of all children have no father, 20 per cent. are illegitimate, a large number come from unmarried couples, the remainder are orphans.

167,044 flats are needed in the whole of Austria, according to the latest statistical records. Behind this dreary figure there are hundreds of thousands of human tragedies. Not included in this figure are the many thousands of families which must dwell in old, derelict, insanitary places; those 167,044 families are looking for accommodation and have no home of their own at all. They live herded together with relatives or as sub-tenants. The sorry record is held by Vienna, where in spite of all municipal building, there is a lack of 62,741 flats. "On the question of how the shocking balance sheet of Austria's housing misery could be remedied," said a reporter, "the statistical office can, of course, give no information."

Even the various homes for the homeless (cases of ejection, etc.) in Vienna have 200 family applicants on their waiting lists, although they offer only temporary

abodes of some sort.

One must read the columns in the newspapers describing the housing conditions and the awful ordeals of all those thousands of families in quest of a home, to realize the amount of human suffering and degradation.

Just the same in Paris and London and Brussels

And those interested in conditions in other countries will learn that housing conditions there are even worse. According to official statistics, there are 1,180,000 dwellings in Paris, 260,000 of which have no water, 250,000 no gas, and 60,000 no electric current. The action of a priest, the Abbé Pierre, who undertook to arouse the public conscience after more and more people had been found frozen to death in the streets of Paris, would indeed seem to fully bear out what has been said about Paris on that score.

After reading a report of conditions in a working class district in Brussels ("one of the most chromium-plated capitals in Europe"), the young king of Belgium made a secret six-hour tour of the district and "got a shock." The priest who accompanied him said afterwards: "The king was distressed at what he saw," and said that "it is a tragedy that humans should have to live in such conditions." He visited 30 tenements. One housewife mistook the bespectacled, studious-looking king for a sanitary inspector. She showed him a broken-down lavatory shared by 17 families. "Look at that," she told the king, "and to think the landlord has one in marble."

What a correspondent (an estate agent) in the *London Times* (12.6.1956) said on the housing problem in another Welfare State, England, literally fits the situation in this country when he writes: "... several of the 50 families we have had to deal with in the last three months have been on a council list for anything between five and 12 years." After describing the impossibility of wage-earners being able to buy a house, the correspondent says: "We have tried lately not to make our small society known, from despair at coping with any more cases of most cruel hardship; young couples turned out of their lodgings on arrival of a baby; husbands separated from their wives and children; families living crowded in one room, others in L.C.C. hostels for as much as three years. Every council in and around London sees the problem as of overwhelming urgency."

There is probably not one of the "fair cities of the world" where the mass of the inhabitants are not herded together often in what can only be described as slums and suffer the physical and mental torment which such atrocious housing conditions bring in their train.

"Get children and lose your job"

It is not only the housing question that terrifies many women at the prospect of having children; it is the fear of losing their jobs or the difficulty of getting one, apart from numerous other considerations—all due to the fact of poverty. In their despair they resort to illegal operations, imploring doctors to perform them, with the result that when eventually found out, physicians and patients go to prison. In February this year a trial took place at the Vienna Court when no fewer than 300 women and

a number of doctors had to stand trial for such illegal action. Under the heading: "Weeping women, grinning listeners," the *Arbeiter Zeitung* reported how people outside the court fought with fists for seats. One can only imagine the ordeal of women having before the judge to answer embarrassing questions about the most intimate particulars of their married life. One has to bear in mind that there are women who have no parents, no home and no jobs and who threaten to commit suicide unless the doctor helps them. Again and again women bring children into the world in the open, because they have no homes, no money, no work. After reporting on one of these cases, the paper says: "Now the woman is in hospital. She gets food and has a bed. Then she will move with her child to a Central Children's Home. But what then? She has no home."

Child mortality

Dr. H. Czermak, of the Vienna University Clinic for Children, declared before the Society for Children's Welfare that Austria showed the highest infantile mortality in West and Northern Europe. In this country, Dr. Czermak revealed, eight healthily born children die every day. One might ask what sense there is in preaching the increase of births and to punish women and doctors for interfering with the growth and development of new life when the economic conditions of the family make it impossible for the woman to do without the earnings from a job? Even the inveterate apologists for wage-slavery, such as the *Arbeiter Zeitung*, have to confess that the low wage earned by the husbands absolutely forces women to go to work. What to do with the children while the mother is at work, that is the problem. And what does the "Socialist" Party of Austria propose as a remedy for this and the other social problems? Socialism? Not on your life! Create more children's hostels, where the poor things can be deposited while the mother is at work! And setting up a marriage and family advisory committee and service to repair broken and ill marriages!

"Our welfare workers can sing a very nasty song indeed of the conditions which they find in such marriages in which there are children. Most of the 5,000 children in the municipal institutions come from such marriages." "The shocking fact," said the deputy mayor,

"induced us to set up a committee."

That these conditions are not confined to Austria, but prevail all over the capitalist world, was confirmed by the International Youth Aid Society, which stated that of 900 million children, 600 million are undernourished, badly clothed, insufficiently housed and not properly protected against illness.

Suicides in Austria

In a leading article under the heading "Died on the Welfare State," *Die Presse* (19.4.1956) wrote:

"In the city of Vienna suicides are on the order of the day. In the last decades they have increased to such a frightful extent that the public scarcely takes notice of them. Two or three lines in the papers, often not even so much, coolly report that X, Y, Z could no longer cope with their conditions of existence and saw no other way out than death. ... Also, yesterday, one could read that a 65-year-old war invalid hanged himself in a room of the Health Insurance Premises. He had been sent from one department to another until he could no longer stand it and decided to end it all. ... This case is sad proof that even the finest National Insurance Law, however cleverly it may be conceived and well meant, can never provide a solution of the social problems of our days, but brings the danger, like the innumerable other welfare, health-insurance and old age protection laws, to become a soulless mechanism, which in the end crushes those whom they were intended to help."

And under the heading: "Many suicides in Austria," the *Arbeiter Zeitung* reported that in 25 countries, with a total of 400 million people, about 72,000 persons commit suicide every year. Austria is always found among the group topping the list, with Japan, Denmark and Switzerland. Whatever the reports say about causes, there is no doubt whatever that the overwhelming majority drift to suicide, just as they do to crime through poverty. And who does not know by now that the cause of poverty is Capitalism.

At the time of writing, a local theatre produces the drama "Poverty," by Anton Wildgans, in which, among other working class catastrophes, a small postal clerk (another nationalized industry said to belong to the people) dies after an illness which was for his family an almost greater catastrophe than his death. Said a theatre critic: "The play verily has lost nothing of its poignant actuality."

(To be continued).

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,—Although I am not a member of your party, I read *Questions of the Day* and *Socialist Comment* with great enjoyment. These pamphlets were well written, and it is a refreshing change to read some political propaganda which has some literary merit. However, two points—one minor the other major—need answering.

Firstly, when talking of the Class and Colour problems in South Africa your writer says: "Many British clergymen have gained a cheap reputation of liberality by pointing out these evils, although they close their eyes to the exploitation of workers on their own doorsteps; i.e., in Britain. This seems to me to be a rather cheap and ill-founded attack on Father Huddleston, who really is concerned about the plight of the native in South Africa. I should like your correspondent to justify his remark."

Secondly, your definition of the Marxist interpretation of history, although I realise that it has to be compressed for reasons of space, is utterly misleading. The economic interpretation of history does not mean that men are wholly or primarily actuated by economic motives. To use the words of Professor Schumpeter: "The explanation of the role and mechanism of non-economic motives and the analysis of the way in which social reality mirrors itself in the individual psyche is an essential element of the theory, and one of its most significant contributions. Marx did not hold that religions, metaphysics, and political volitions were either reducible to economic motives or of no importance. He only tried to unveil the economic conditions which shape them and which account for their rise and fall."

Finally, the economic interpretation of history has often been called the materialistic interpretation of

history. Your writer in *Socialist Comment* makes this mistake. Marx's philosophy is no more materialistic than is Hegel's, and his theory of history is not more materialistic than is any other attempt to account for the historical process by the means of empirical science. It should be clear that this is logically compatible with any metaphysical or religious belief—exactly as any physical picture of the world is. Medieval theology itself supplies

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the "Socialist Standard," June, 1907)

Argument about War in 1907

[Hervé, in France, had been carrying on anti-militarist propaganda. Bebel, in Germany, denounced it. Hervé referred to a recent tense situation between Germany and France over Morocco. When war did break out in 1914 Hervé supported it.]
Hervé:

"If war had broken out over Morocco between France and Germany, the two proletariats, French and German, would have protested through the voices of their parliamentary tenors; resolutions proclaiming eloquently the fraternity of the two peoples would have been exchanged, and then, fraternally, the French and German working classes would have gone to massacre each other

methods by which it is possible to establish this compatibility. Several Catholic radicals declare themselves Marxists in everything except in matters relating to their faith.

Thank you again for some interesting reading.

Yours faithfully,

"HISTORY SIXTH."

in order to find out with which of the two capitalist classes Morocco would remain."

Bebel:—

"The ideas and the anti-militarist propaganda of Hervé are impossible in German Social Democracy. German Social Democracy is the avowed adversary of the present military system, but it considers that a military organisation is necessary in the states now existing so long as all the civilised nations shall not have established conventions and institutions which would once for all render war impossible. So long as the danger exists and wars are possible, every nation should possess a military organisation sufficient for resisting an aggressive war and defending its own territory against the invasions of the enemy."

IT'S THAT "GREAT MAN" IDEA AGAIN

FROM the earliest times of recorded history up to the present age, the idea of the "great man," "the superman" has captured the imagination of the crowd. Stroll along any of the main highways of the world's big cities and we are confronted with statues of every conceivable size erected in remembrance of these "great men." But, like everything else, the worship of this "great man" idea has been done to death. There was Jesus Christ for example, supposedly crucified, dead and buried, but three days afterwards (so is the legend) popped back to life again. God had sent him. "He was the son of God." And no man can, according to the Christians, surpass Christ. He was, and remains, the greatest of them all.

Of course this is all very childish now to those adults who have made any attempt to understand the historic origins of life—humanity and all its heirs and relations. Why has this "great man" idea been so carefully fostered through the ages? It is hard for the rationally minded to believe that it is a "carry over" from early man's cave dwelling origins, a memory and worship for the departed chief warrior, high priest.

Even if it be conceded that recollection of the deeds of these great men have been a source of inspiration—for a time—in the main it has been one of the biggest contributory causes of the worshippers overlooking their own miserable plight.

We are prompted to record these few odds and ends about the "great man idea" because of what the *Manchester Guardian* recently described as "the long and occasionally acrimonious struggle to perpetuate the



"It's that 'great man' idea again."

memory of Keir Hardie in Parliament's own small Valhalla of statutory. . . . The origin of Keir Hardie's fame is associated with the fact that he entered Parliament wearing a cap, a severe blow to the respectability and propriety which had been enjoyed by that assembly for generations. It is often murmured even now that it undermined for a decade respect for political tradition. But what's in a hat or a cap for that matter. Has not the recently re-

signed Prime Minister set the fashion in head gear, inspiring many and otherwise very humbler members of the community to appear less humble—and correspondingly more respectable. There have been others, Baldwin with his pipe, Joseph Chamberlain with his eye glass and orchids; the world's "big chum" with his big cigars and last, and by no means least, the Welsh miner who once coloured the pages of history by recording on a particular occasion his destestation of vermin!

All these incidents are of course quite trifling, but we would ask in all seriousness whether the cause of Socialism owes anything to whatever Keir Hardie ever said, whether with cap or bareheaded. Suffice it to say that the Keir Hardie Memorial Committee has been struggling for so many years to get the House of Commons to accept "a fine golden gleaming bust . . ." (but without that cap) to adorn those sacred precincts of the House of Commons. Lord Samuel, speaking on the occasion, is reported to have said . . . "Keir Hardie's cap struck a discordant note. It made us feel slightly uncomfortable. It was meant to make us feel uncomfortable." Mr. Gaitskell made his tribute at the occasion, saying, ". . . Far

more than any other man, Keir Hardie had founded the Labour Party. His Socialism was idealistic in character, drawing more from Methodism, from Robert Burns, than from men like Karl Marx!"

Seriously we ask, what do Mr. Fenner Brockway, chairman of the Keir Hardie Memorial Committee, and Mr. Gaitskell, the old Etonian, really think about such odds and ends, which takes the mind back to the times of Moses, to the primordial past, leaving the story still untold of the manner and ways in which Capitalism still enfolds the life of the worker, with its slums, its homeless millions the world over. May we ask these two sentimentally saturated and posing politicians whether working class understanding of Capitalism as the cause and Socialism as the remedy for the existing ghastly lot suffered by the working class has been advanced one tittle? Or is it perhaps a vain hope which excites both these two political "show offs" to be "the bust of a to-morrow!" Who knows and who cares? Is not this the land of cant and humbug and can political humbugger go lower?

O.C.I.

DEBATE

SOCIALISM VERSUS RELIGION

A DEBATE was arranged under the above title between the Socialist Party, represented by Comrade Jarvis, and the Catholic Evidence Guild, represented by Mr. Barr. It took place at Head Office on Sunday, March 31st, with Comrade Kersley in the chair. It started promptly at 7.30 with all seats taken, and subsequently more people arrived and packed the hall. About half the audience were non-members.

Comrade Jarvis opened with a 20-minute speech, in which he said that it was agreed between the opponents that there were problems in the world waiting to be solved—the problem of war, poverty, hunger, misery, unemployment, crises, etc. It was the Socialist Party's view that these problems could only be solved by changing the social system from Capitalism to Socialism. His opponent, however, claimed that religion (or Catholicism) was the answer to the world's problems.

Comrade Jarvis then outlined the Party's case as given in the pamphlet *The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy*. He stated that there was no room for religion or any form of mysticism in our policy. Religion was defined as man's knowledge of God, or "the mental faculty enabling men to comprehend the Infinite." There can be no religion without God, although there can be religious ritual and paraphernalia without God. Religion consists of five things, and all the necessary emotional trimmings accompanying them. These are:—

1. Belief in God or gods.
2. Belief in Holy or Inspired writings (Bible, Koran, Zend Avesta).
3. Belief in after Life.
4. Belief in the Efficacy of Prayer.
5. Belief in Miracles.

If God does not exist it would follow that the last four of these fundamentals of religion are of no consequence. (To this Mr. Barr nodded approvingly.) The

existence of God could not be proved, maintained Comrade Jarvis. Belief in God had declined in proportion to the growth of education and freedom of speech, whilst in the centuries of Catholic domination, when no opposition was permitted, the majority believed in God. Atheism and materialism had therefore grown with increased knowledge. This debate could never have occurred in the heyday of Catholicism, with its ruthless tortures and death penalties for all who questioned its authority.

After dealing briefly with the usual arguments offered for the existence of God, Comrade Jarvis went on to state that the problem of evil in the world, the existence of wars, poverty, unemployment, crime, crises, etc., made it clear that no Supreme Being existed. Nor could it be claimed that evil, cruelty and barbarity are just man made, for barbarity exists among the animals. The cat plays with a mouse until it has been slowly tortured to death and the jungles are filled with ferocious beasts who live by tearing to pieces smaller and weaker animals. If God could make herbivorous animals why not make them all like that instead of creating carnivorous ones. Everywhere the law of the jungle dominated human life under capitalism.

Since the discovery of the laws of Evolution, it was possible to trace the evolution of the idea of God in primitive society, and now that we know the origin of the God idea, this cuts the ground from under the feet of the theist. "The heavens no longer proclaim the glory of God, nor does the firmament show his handiwork." God who could reveal himself at any moment has now to be searched for. The time has come to conduct God to the frontiers, thank him for his services, and ask him not to call again and trouble us with his diversions, as we wish to change the economic basis of society, and for

Continued overleaf

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JUNE



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; phone: MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

CAN'T THE ENGINEERS MEET THE MINERS?

THERE were two items of news in the Press during the first week of May that had a certain importance in themselves, but which gain greatly in significance when brought together. They both dealt with nationalisation. The first was from the engineers.

"Leaders of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, at their annual policy-making conference at Eastbourne, yesterday adopted a resolution calling for nationalisation of the motor car industry. The resolution stated that lack of planning in the industry had been a contributory factor in the decline in car production in the past year and that nationalisation would establish full employment in a planned and prosperous industry." (News-Chronicle, 3/5/57).

The second related to the miners, being a report of a speech at a South Wales Miners' Conference by the President, Mr. Will Paynter.

"Mr. Paynter said that ten years' nationalisation had shattered illusions that the workers would exercise a decisive control in running the industry. Nationalisation changed the form of control for the better, but fundamentally the industry remained a source of profit for the previous owners and big business generally. Participation of the workers in control and direction of the industry was non-existent, and consultation was superficial and largely window-dressing.

Miners' wages and conditions had not improved to the measure that could be reasonably expected. Nationalisation had been deliberately used to provide coal to big industry at low prices to enhance their profits. It had also been exploited by the State in meeting financial burdens that legitimately were liabilities for the Exchequer.

"Nationalisation is not an end in itself, it is a means to an end. Its role and function today reveals the 'end' as being a cheap product for capitalist industry to strengthen and perpetuate capitalism." (Manchester Guardian, 7/5/57).

The S.P.G.B. has been telling the miners and engineers for 50 years that nationalisation would not solve the problems of the workers. Now that the miners, with 10 years' enlightening experience behind them, are discovering the truth of what we said, may we invite them first to dissuade the engineers from wasting their time, then to get together with the latter to study the case for Socialism?

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SOCIALISM v. RELIGION—continued from page 77

this purpose do not need spirits, spooks or ghosts (whether holy or otherwise).

Comrade Jarvis finished by challenging Mr. Barr to prove the existence of God, for upon this his whole case must rest, since if no personal God existed, no value could come out of religion which could help the working class to solve the problems which confront them.

Mr. Barr opened by declaring that he had heard all this before—years ago—but that he obviously had too little time at his disposal to deal with all the questions raised. He stated that he had no intention of dealing with the political issues raised in the opener's remarks, firstly because he accepted many of them, and secondly because even former Popes had similar views. He never criticised the party's cause in any way. He then went on to try to prove the existence of God, and declared that it could be inferred from the existence of mind and of order in the universe. He referred again to the shortness of time, and said each part of the debate contained sufficient material for a whole debate. He ended by stating that these debates get nowhere, and he knew in advance that it would be the case.

In Comrade Jarvis's second speech he commenced by saying that Mr. Barr should not have complained of shortness of time, because he had 20 minutes just the same as himself, and as he declined to deal with the political issues, he had the whole of his time to deal with religion and show that it had something to offer mankind to help to solve the world's problems. Mr. Barr, however, had one question to answer—the existence of God—for on that the whole case rests, since if no God can be proved to exist, the edifice of religion crumbles.

Instead of God creating man in his image, man had created his God or gods and always in his own image. He instanced that the gods of the African tribes were black, with short black curly hair, and the gods of the Eskimos were fat and covered with thick furs, etc. In his reply to this Mr. Barr said that Jarvis knew full well that these gods were man-made and false, and consequently had nothing to do with the debate. Jarvis replied by stating that he agreed that they were all false, and therefore it would appear that the only real difference between himself and Mr. Barr was that he believed in one god less than Mr. Barr did, which was a very small difference to argue about.

Comrade Jarvis then read from a number of Catholic pamphlets: "This is the aim which Our Predecessor urged as the necessary object of our efforts: the emancipation of the proletariat." (The Social Order, Pius XI). "For towards the close of the nineteenth century new economic methods and a new expansion of industry had in most countries resulted in a growing division of the population into two classes. The first, small in numbers, enjoyed practically all the advantages so plentifully supplied by modern invention; the second class, comprising the immense multitude of working-men, was made up of those who, oppressed by dire poverty, struggled in vain to escape from the difficulties which encompassed them." Comrade Jarvis suggested that Pope Leo XIII (the author of this statement in Rerum Novarum, re-quoted in The Encyclical Quadragesimo Anno of Pius XI), had been reading some of the banned books, as this passage had a strange resemblance to the writings of Karl Marx.

Another pamphlet quoted from was Cyril Clump's

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A Catholic's Guide to Social and Political Action, which contains a collection of extracts from the writings of the Holy Fathers—who, by the way, are not supposed to be fathers.

After the first two speeches were made on each side, the debate was thrown open to the audience and a special appeal was made from the chair for Catholics or other

opposition to take part in the discussion, but these were conspicuously absent. The debate concluded with the two participants winding up, in which Comrade Jarvis again requested proof of God's existence, and Mr. Barr, who in the meantime had received a host of questions from the audience, again pleaded the impossibility owing to lack of time.

H. JARVIS.

A LETTER TO MISS RYOKO OF JAPAN

The News of the World (7.4.57) published a letter from a Miss Ryoko, in which she expressed her dismay and disappointment that the British Government is continuing with its H-Bomb tests, in spite of protests from Japan. Among other things she wrote:

"So here I am writing with hope—what is the reply of my comrades in United Kingdom on your bomb test against which everyone here claims there is nothing but evil or aggressive intention."

The following letter was sent by a member of the S.P.G.B. to Miss Ryoko.

Dear Miss Ryoko,

Will praying stop war?

No.

Will wishing stop war?

No.

Will deputations to ministers stop war?

No.

What then will?

Firstly, understanding what its causes are. Society is organised into a buying and selling system. Everything from babies' napkins to hearing aids is made for a profit. To live, most of us must work. We work for employers. They sell the goods to make money. When they cannot sell in one place, they try another. When all of them are doing this; e.g., I.C.I., Dunlop, Mitsubishi, Messerschmitt, American Automobiles, a struggle ensues. When the struggle starts to hurt we call it war.

Briefly stated, trade is war.

You spoke in your letter of Britain's peaceful use of atomic energy. But even this is for trading and profit-making.

Let me suggest an example of what is meant. If some brilliant scientist at Harwell found a way of heating the water supply of nearby villages from atomic waste, which cost nothing, would it be pumped free to the people's houses? You know the answer.

The governments represent the interests of the employers—those who own. Therefore, all governments, in the end, work against the interests of those who are employed—those who own nothing (of importance). This is proved by the very operation which is worrying you—development of nuclear weapons. The people hate and fear it. But the governments and ruling groups in all big countries continue to justify the arms race. When the time comes they will conscript the workers, men and women, to fight for them. But if everybody was determined to end profit-society and run industry for people's needs, war could not occur.

In the last century Britain expanded her manufacturing enormously. Huge fortunes were made, while the life of working people was cruel, dirty and dangerous. People died at an earlier age—the deaths of babies were hardly commented on. This process involved too, seeking abroad for raw materials, labour and markets. Result,

constant small wars to this end, with China, India, Africa, and the dark-skinned people of the world generally.

In this century your country had a similar development. And your living standards appal even the lowest paid workers here.

I mention these things to show that trade is struggle, instead of production being geared for free use over the whole world.

You may feel, on reading as far as this, that the writer is a dreadful pessimist, overstating a case. But surely you, as a Japanese woman, are keenly aware that the revolting destructive force of the atom bomb did not prevent America's and Britain's governments from using it on helpless and exposed human beings to achieve their ends. Many people here, when they learnt about such bestiality, were shaken, but I doubt if Mr. Truman and Mr. Churchill were.

Pious resolutions achieve nothing. People must learn to act for themselves. Until they do, the horrors your people suffered will continue to haunt us all.

Some of us are ready.

In the meantime we can only attempt to educate our fellow-workers, as we in our turn have had our eyes opened to the nature of society, and what makes it tick (and explode).

This is a painfully short statement. If you are interested to follow up some of the arguments, I should be very happy to write again.

Yours fraternally,

MARGOT BROWN.

PUBLICATION DATE OF "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

In order that copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD can be on sale in the Provinces on the first day of the month, it has been decided to have it printed several days earlier. This requires that articles shall be delivered to the Editorial Committee at Head Office not later than the 15th of the month. Notices of meetings must also be sent in earlier than in the past, though it will sometimes be possible to secure their insertion later than the 15th.

"It always happens thus: the assimilation of great and new ideas is always a slow and gradual process; there is no haste either here or in any other department of Nature. 'Die zeit ist unendlich lang.'* Steadily the forces work, sometimes seeming to accomplish nothing: sometimes even the motion appears retrograde, but in the long run the destined end is reached, and the course, whether of a planet or of men's thoughts about the universe, is permanently altered." (Pioneers of Science, Oliver Lodge: Macmillan, 1928).

*"Time is endless."

A DATE WITH THE DEAD

SATURDAY, 29th June, 1957, is a date arranged for yet one more posthumous ceremony to be held in honour of those members of the working class who lost their lives in World War II during the Dunkirk campaign. The Queen Mother, it is expected, will "unveil" a memorial at Dunkirk.

Quite apart from the propaganda value of these ceremonies to those who possess but do not produce, the capitalist class are indeed entitled to pay their "respects" to those members of the working class who sacrificed their very lives in their masters' interests; the tragedy being that they erroneously identified working class interests with those of the master class. We repeat erroneously, because under this capitalistic system of society, wars arise through the seething rivalries of sections of the international class of capitalists over markets for their commodities, territory containing mineral wealth, oil, etc., and trade routes, of which the Suez Canal is a classical example.

For the working class to engage in a bloody struggle over which capitalist group is to control the largest slice of the social wealth *filched from them as the producers via the medium of the wages system*, is very much like a man who, being robbed of his wallet in a back alley by two assailants who fall out over the share of the loot, helps one of them to take the lot! Whereupon he is "rewarded" with a copper coin as a "memorial" to his stupidity.

To revert to Dunkirk—these "unveilings" are performed with all the tricks and trappings of religious mumbo jumbo in order to perpetuate the idea of a supernatural power, an "Almighty God," whose insatiable appetite for human sacrifice in "His" name (not capitalism's, of course) will never be satisfied whilst there is a religious minded working class, ready to throw their lives away—for "God and country." Workers whose intellects are dimmed with religious teachings inculcated at an early and impressionable age are more vulnerable to these "theatricals" and more easily duped with cheap metal medals and the like. There is a parallel with the

"Bible and Bottle of Whisky" technique which paid such rich dividends in the building of the British Empire!

Whilst this *primitive worship of the dead* is being enacted for the purpose of stultifying non-Socialist workers' mentalities, the urgent need for Socialism is pinpointed with news of ever greater lethal missiles, guaranteed to produce results paling into insignificance the sum total of "War Memorial Representation" to date!

Truly, "the customs and traditions of the past" do "weigh like an alp on the brains of the living." No doubt there will be medals galore on show during this blood-stained ritual at Dunkirk, and whilst there is a lot to be said for having one's name on a medal in lieu of a war memorial(!), the writer has personal experience of contacts with many an ex-Serviceman who tried to sell him their medals for scrap silver, only to find they were made of base metal, and, to use a popular expression, "not worth a light." This applies to medals issued in relation to World War II. The previous War I medals were at least made of silver, and many an old pensioner, eking out his remaining days on the "Plimsoll Line" of capitalism was glad to "take the cash and let the credit go." The eagerness they displayed for the "ready" was matched by the chagrin of those who received the base metal "awards."

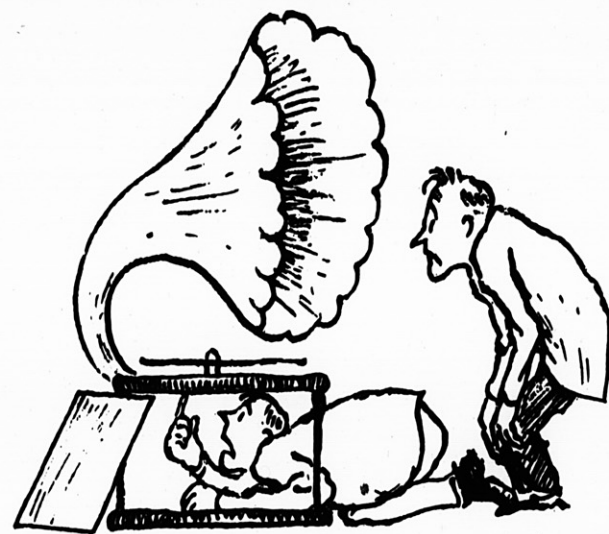
Here we see the hollowness and hypocrisy of the state machinery of capitalism, attracting working class youth with glamour and ceremonial in the defence of vested interests—and discarding those who survive at the end of each blood bath with worthless metal discs—"For services rendered," and in some cases a paltry pension, which may be whittled down each succeeding year of the recipient's survival until a state of affairs exists, epitomised by one old pensioner, who declaimed, on unsuccessfully looking round his bare room for something or other to sell: "There's nowt left but me, lad." Is this what they mean, who loudly proclaim: "The Englishman's home is his castle"?

In conclusion, we, as Socialists, are concerned with "unveiling"—not the hunk of masonry at Dunkirk, but what lies behind it.

G. R. RUSSELL.

COMMUNIST COMMOTION

FREE Harich, sack Harry," painted with true Communist zeal in large white letters on the roadway greeted the faithful as they entered Hammersmith Town Hall over the Easter week-end to receive their annual dose of dogma from the cardinals of King Street, and to indulge in some public confessions of political sins. This slogan was not a rabble-rousing challenge to strike fear into the hearts of Yankee capitalists or war-mongering Tories; it was directed not outwards, but inwards, to the heart of the Workers' Mass Party itself. Harich is the young intellectual imprisoned by the East German government, and guess who Harry is? Yes, none other than Cardinal Harry Pollitt. Alas! we confidently predict that this slogan will have as little effect in altering the status quo as others which have appeared on walls from time to time to enliven the working-class scene have had (e.g., "Hands off Guatemala," "End Eden's War," "Chuck The Tories Out," etc.). Harry is still there, and so, presumably, is Harich—but in a different place.



"That's funny—there are 'nt any works in the damn thing."

The irreverent slogan was, however, a sign of a definite air of revolt which hung over the proceedings, a revolt which, if not quite amounting to "ruthless self-criticism," was at least an indication of a fairly advanced state of political masochism. Cardinal J. Gollan, the Party secretary, had to announce that 7,000 of the faithful had left the flock during the preceding year: others were all too ready to voice their doubts, especially about the Russian intervention in Hungary. "One delegate remarked that in 22 years he had never known a Congress that had such a 'type of discussion getting down to it.'" (*Observer*, 21/4/57). The college of cardinals, including Gollan, Matthews, Mahon and Pollitt, struggled manfully with incantations and holy writ to exorcise the devils of heresy.

Representatives of the Labour press were excluded from the conference. Could this be because Mr. Peter Fryer (who resigned from the *Daily Worker* over the treatment of his reports from Hungary and who was later expelled from the C.P.) was the would-be representative for *Tribune*?

Hungary

Although the hierarchy's policy obtained an "overwhelming majority" of votes in its support from the Congress, there were some rather frank things said about the Russian intervention in Hungary. For instance, Mr. J. McLoughlin, the famous Dagenham campanologist, was most vociferous: "Don't dig your heads in the sand," he said "and ignore Hungary. Terrible things have happened." And, he added, in a final fling at the platform, "I want to come to the next Congress and see at least a partially new front bench—not the Dutt-Pollitt-what's-his-name axis." (*Observer*, 21/4/57.) Tut, tut, John, flattery will get you nowhere.

J. McLachlan (Scotland); "The *Daily Worker* told us that there was black counter-revolution in Hungary, but, in fact, there were popular demonstrations against a bureaucratic regime," he said. "I agree that these were used by reactionary forces, and I agree that the final intervention by Soviet forces was necessary. But terrible mistakes had been made by the Soviet and Hungarian leaders, and we should condemn those mistakes at this congress." (*Daily Worker*, 22/4/57.)

Another outspoken critic was Mr. Brian Behan. "At a meeting of the executive," said Brian Behan, "he had moved an amendment that they should dissociate themselves from the crimes of the Hungarian Communist Party, but this had not been printed in the *Daily Worker*. He had been told that this was due to a technical error(!) and accepted this, but he believed that his amendment should have been reported to Congress." (*Daily Worker*, 20/4/57.) Readers who may be prematurely rejoicing at the thought of free speech pervading the upper layers of the Communist hierarchy will no doubt be saddened to learn that Mr. Behan did not gain a place on the new executive: the above statement, and others we shall be reporting later in this article, may offer slight clues as to the cause of his unfortunate political demise.

Mr. Fryer was not permitted to put his case before Congress, but copies of a speech he would have made were distributed. A portion of this speech (reported in the *Manchester Guardian* of 22/4/57) is most revealing, and is worth reproducing here: "You can cross out my name from the membership list with a stroke of the pen. But you cannot cross out the truth about Hungary with a stroke of the pen. The truth about Hungary is known

perfectly well to many of you who will vote for the rejection of my appeal. In the privacy of his office J. R. Campbell (editor of the *Daily Worker*) speaks of Kadar as a puppet. I am expelled for blazoning abroad what Campbell knows to be the truth."

The Bomb, and Conscription

Male Communists are capable of making some monumentally fatuous remarks, but it takes a female Communist (Comrade Frances Silcocks, from Yorkshire) to reach the ultimate low in fatuity. After dilating on the struggle of working-class women against the horrors of the H-bomb, this Diana of the barricades said: "Now we are told that the Soviet Union is testing the bomb, and we are asked what we say about that," she said. "We are opposed to tests in any country, including the Soviet Union. But what is the Soviet Union to do? Is it to sit on the fence until we throw bombs at them and they have none to throw back?" (*Daily Worker*, 20/4/57.) Certainly not, Comrade Frances, we hero mothers of the Communist Party would consider it an honour and a privilege to be liquidated by a real, class-conscious, Soviet H-bomb.

"There was a short, sharp debate on conscription. By 321 votes to 135 Congress defeated a proposal that the Party should fight to end conscription." (*Daily Worker*, 22/4/57.) The ubiquitous Mr. McLoughlin also had some words to say on this subject: "The Tory Government had announced a new policy on conscription, but the Communist Party was still committed to it. Why?" he asked. "Perhaps because the Russians have got conscription." "Don't be provocative," called out a delegate. (*Daily Worker*, 20/4/57.)

Democracy

The election of the executive committee was democratic in the extreme; 42 members were "recommended" for election, and, would you believe it, "a party spokesman said . . . that there would be 42 members on the new executive." (*Manchester Guardian*, 20/4/57.) How convenient! As we mentioned before, careless talk cost Mr. Behan his seat on the band-wagon.

Lest we appear too harsh on the comrades, we should mention that they stage-managed quite a nice little show of "democracy" during the congress. The minority formulation in the draft revised text of *The British Road to Socialism* relating to "fraternal relations between Socialist Britain and the countries of the British Empire" received a majority of votes over the majority (executive committee) version. However, we defy anyone to show us any fundamental difference between the two drafts as reported on the front page of the *Daily Worker* of 22/4/57. The debate was, as the immortal bard said, "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

A final indication of the degree of democracy which pervaded the congress is that 57 general resolutions submitted by branches were not discussed, and "before delegates had seen them they were asked to agree to remit them to the National Executive, and in the end they did so." (*Manchester Guardian*, 23/4/57.)

"Revisionism"

Cardinal Gollan admirably defined this fine old Bolshevik euphemism for criticism of official party policy in his weighty address to his flock (*Daily Worker*, 20/4/57). "We use the word 'revisionist' advisedly, not as a bit of name-calling, but to describe objective tendencies. These were the contributions attacking the

essential basis of the Party, democratic centralism and its leading role." He later said (*Daily Worker*, 22/4/57): "Lenin and the Bolsheviks had to fight revisionists all their lives." Exactly; the modern disciples of Pope Lenin have to carry on the good fight—no wonder they don't have any time to discuss Socialism.

Another outspoken delegate was Professor Hyman Levy, who denied that the loss of 7,000 members was due to "revisionism," "but to the attitude of the leaders to events in Russia and Eastern Europe." (*Manchester Guardian*, 22/4/57.) Professor Levy "challenged his chairman, Mr. Harry Pollitt, to explain his silence about 'a gangsterism' in the Soviet Union. How often has Harry Pollitt been told about this? How often has he told people to keep their mouths shut?" Need we add that Professor Levy's utterances were nowhere reported in the pages of the *Daily Worker*? Much prominence was, however, given to a "reply" by Andrew Rothstein, a reply deeply embedded in party dogma. (*Daily Worker*, 23/4/57).

Kerala

The recent coming to power of a "communist" government in the State of Kerala in India received much plaudits from the assembled comrades. Cardinal George Matthews said (*Daily Worker*, 22/4/57): "The victory of the Communist Party of India in the State of Kerala is a portent of far-reaching political developments which will take place among the teeming millions of India." No one outside the Communist Party phantasy world, however, will be surprised to learn that business in Kerala continues much as before, on sound capitalist lines, and the revolutionary Communist ministers' "deeds and sayings in one single day are too bourgeois for words," according to Miss Taya Zinkin in the *Manchester Guardian* (24/4/57). She continues: "The Chief Minister attended Acharya Vinoba Bhave's prayer meeting yesterday, bought a copy of his book on the Gita (Hinduism's Bible), and asked for an autograph of India's walking saint . . . Meanwhile the Health Minister, Mr. R. A. Menon . . . told the Palghat Poor Home Society that the beggar problem must be solved by private institutions because the Government can do very little," etc.

"The British Road to Socialism"

Some heretic voices were even raised against this blueprint for revolution (1957 version, with all the latest tactical amendments and deletions to match the day-to-day struggle. E. & O.E.). A genuine, old-fashioned kind of Bolshevik is T. Connor who "opposed the draft as a revisionist (ouch; that word again) programme, and he was fighting for a return to revolutionary Socialism. He moved an amendment calling for the formation of workers' councils and councils of action through which power would be seized." (*Daily Worker*, 22/4/57.) Cardinal J. R. Campbell rebutted this idea, evocative as it is of sterner, ruder, Bolshevik days. "The amendment put forward by Huyton, suggesting that workers' councils and councils of action would elect a Socialist Government, proposed to substitute for the pure milk of Marxism the skimmed milk of Trotskyism," he said. (Laughter.) May we remind the reverend Cardinal and all the sheep who laughed so heartily at his witticism, that once upon a time "councils of action," "workers' councils," "united fronts," etc., were all the rage on the revolutionary front. For instance, a circular issued by the "Red International of Labour Unions" came into our hands (SOCIALIST STANDARD, March 1923) before the

word "Trotskyism" (one of the foulest swear-words in the Communist vocabulary) was invented. This circular advocated the concentration of "all available strength" by the formation of "councils of action through the medium of conference composed of delegates from trades councils, trade union branches, and district committees, working class local and national political organisations, unemployed organisations, co-operative societies and guilds." Stick that in your milk and skim it, Campbell. Cardinal Campbell opposed the nationalisation of certain types of land, not because it is not Socialism, but because "it would also lead to endless complications pushing masses of people on to the wrong side of the class struggle." (*Daily Worker*, 22/4/57). Yes, but which side? With true revolutionary zeal the good Cardinal also opposed the policy of "no compensation," because it "would alarm those we are seeking to neutralise, would create the maximum opposition and make most difficult a peaceful transition."

To prove that the female of the Communist species is more deadly than the male, Mrs. Gwen Shield moved an amendment to reject the draft's proposal to compensate former owners of nationalised industries. "She wanted them to get only the opportunity to work and when prevented by physical incapacity to get National Insurance benefits." (*Daily Worker*, 22/4/57). Good news for all you capitalists!

What of the Future?

Thousands of members have left the Communist Party during the past year, and many more may do so after this year's conference, which has conclusively proved the party hierarchy's refusal to budge one inch from its rigid pro-Russian line. But the "hard core" will carry on, for, in Cardinal Pollitt's own words, "We all owe everything to the party, whatever we do and whatever our job" (*Daily Worker*, 23/4/57).

Professor Levy summed up the Communist Party's political influence thus: "The working class of this country have constantly rejected the Communist Party," he said. "You keep on talking as if you were the leading group." (*Manchester Guardian*, 22/4/57). Whatever future party line the diehards adopt in following the tortuous changes in the policy of the Russian ruling class, it will inevitably be anti-working-class and anti-Socialist. The Communist Party's past history has been a chapter of misrepresentation, trickery, deceit and humbug. Its future is likely to be no different. M. L.

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STALINISM, RUSSIA AND THE JEWS

IN August 1939 the Soviet-Nazi pact of non-aggression and co-operation between Russia and Germany was signed. From this date the position of the Jews in the Soviet Union became most difficult. The Soviet government did not allow the Russian Yiddish Press to mention Nazi atrocities against Jews in Europe; and, more important, when the Germans did make their attack on the Soviet Union in 1941, millions of Jews had not been warned or evacuated from the areas of Western Russia and Eastern Poland, annexed by Russia. Of the situation at the beginning of the war between Germany and Russia, David J. Dallin, the well-known Menshevik writer and commentator, wrote in his book, *The New Soviet Empire*:—

"The fury of the German occupation was directed primarily against the Jews and against members of the Communist Party. But the Soviet radio and press chose to say nothing of this. They sought to create the impression that the Germans were out to exterminate everyone alike. And so, while Berlin was maintaining a strict silence about its gas ovens, its concentration camps, and S.S. atrocities against Jewish women and children, the Moscow government also kept quiet. The motives may have differed, but the result was the same. Neither the Russian nor the Jewish population of Russia knew what the German war held in store for them" (p. 115).

At the beginning of the war 60,000 Jews were massacred in Riga; 12,000 in Minsk; 10,000 in Pinsk; 7,000 in Kerch; 6,000 in Vitebsk, and so on. But by 1942 the Soviet government began to show a great deal of interest in the Jews. It encouraged their nationalistic and religious feelings. It formed the "Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee." But in areas overrun by the German armies anti-Jewish feeling, encouraged to a large extent by the Germans, began to show itself. Dallin, in his book, *The Real Soviet Russia*, says that under the German occupation, especially in the beginning, dozens of Russian pro-Nazi newspapers were started, in which they welcomed, "on behalf of the intelligentsia" and "on behalf of the Russian people," the liberation from Bolshevism and "Jewish rule." (p. 209). And directly after the war Mr. M. Philips Price, M.P., who visited the Soviet Union, kept on hearing in Kiev, in the Ukraine, that "these Jews are here again." (*Russia, Red or White*, p. 68). The Jewish population was—and still is—large in Kiev. Before the 1917 Revolution the Jews in Kiev, as elsewhere in the Ukraine and Western Russia, were mainly engaged in small trades, general dealing and petty business. Today most of their businesses and shops are nationalised and the Jews are found in large numbers as civil servants, clerks in state enterprises, etc. They were to a large extent the backbone of the Stalinist bureaucracy before the last war.

After the War

Nazi anti-Jewish propaganda had had a profound effect on sections of the Soviet people, and this strengthened Jewish nationalism, Zionism, and the desire for a national homeland. Later Jewish feeling in Russia was further stirred by the actual creation of the State of Israel. And the Soviet government feared that the establishment of the State of Israel would encourage Zionism or "Jewish bourgeois nationalism," as they called it, even more in the Soviet Union itself.

From the end of 1947 the fight against "bourgeois nationalism" was on. It was conducted by the Stalinists

with much violence, particularly in the Ukraine. "The first admission about the emergence of Zionist tendencies in the post-war period," writes Walter Kolarz, "was made in September 1947, during the plenary session of the Union of Soviet Writers of the Ukraine, where 'the existence of nationalist Zionist views in the work of a number of Jewish writers' was unmasked." (*Russia and Her Colonies*, p. 168). Later on, in 1949, the Yiddish almanac, *Der Shtern*, was banned for "ideological mistakes." The Jewish publishing house, *Der Emes*, the Jewish newspaper, *Aynikeit*, and the Jewish theatre were all closed down in 1949; and the Jewish anti-Fascist committee was disbanded.

Stalinist persecution of the Jews continued for some time. In 1953 many Soviet Jews were disturbed by the so-called "Jewish doctors plot." Communists in Russia, Britain and elsewhere denied that there was an anti-Semitic campaign in Russia. But since Stalin's death they have changed their minds. They are now admitting much of the truth.

Communist Party Report

In October 1956 a delegation from the British Communist Party visited the Soviet Union. They have summarised their findings in the official Communist journal, *World News* (12/1/57).

The report states that prior to Stalin's death rumours began to spread that all was not well, and that well-known Jewish writers and "intellectuals" in the Soviet Union had disappeared. After the Khrushchev revelations at the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union specific charges were made in *Folksztyme*, a Polish Jewish workers' paper, "that could not be ignored, for these charges were consistent with the kind of accusations which Khrushchev had levelled against Stalin, Beria and the security police." The report continues:—

"The charges specifically named a number of Jewish writers, artists and intellectuals as having been tortured and physically destroyed, particularly during the period 1948-52, and this included the whole Jewish anti-Fascist Committee which had done yeoman service in helping to mobilise Jewish support of the Soviet Union during the darkest days of the war."

The delegation found many difficulties in their search for information, but they found a certain amount of negative information at the Lenin State Library, where there was a Yiddish and a Hebrew section containing 15,000 and 70,000 items respectively. But: "It turned out that there is nothing in Yiddish later than 1948, when publication of Yiddish papers and journals must therefore have ceased."

The *Soviet Encyclopedia*, which in its 1932 edition devoted 160 columns to the Jews, had in its 1952 edition only four columns.

"The biographies of many eminent Jews had been removed. Marx was no longer referred to as a Jew . . . For example, *Heimland*, a Yiddish journal, was in the library up to the volumes of 1948 and no later. The collected works of Halkin and Vergelis, Yiddish poets still alive, were there up to 1948."

But, as the delegation reports, that year seemed to be marked out as a significant date.

The Black Years

It was through personal conversations by one of the delegation, H. Levy, that the delegation found out

that the years 1948-52 were known by Soviet Jews as "The Black Years"—a period during which many Jews disappeared; when many more were dismissed from their jobs; when Jewish writers and poets and artists were arrested and charged with treason; when Jews were executed and murdered, and Yiddish disappeared from the street and the market place.

"Conversations with the relatives of cultural workers who had been liquidated seemed to suggest that the procedure was invariable. Those arrested and charged in secret were prominent political or cultural workers. Shortly after his arrest the immediate relatives of the arrested man would be deported to some distant place and there set to work often at low wages. Finally, the husband would be shot, perhaps after torture, to try to force him to confess or incriminate others . . . and this procedure was carried out by the security police under the direct authority of Beria, with the agreement of Stalin himself, who had apparently become convinced of Beria's genuineness in seeking out the class enemy. . . .

It is unnecessary to give chapter and verse as proof of these crimes. They are known, admitted and accepted as fact in the Soviet Union today, and no attempt is made to deny them. Since the Twentieth Congress many facts stand out as evidence of a changed attitude and therefore as indirect evidence of the terror that proceeded it."

BLACK MASTERS FOR WHITE

COMMUNISTS and half-baked "progressives" have hailed the inauguration (on March 6th) of the State of Ghana as a great step towards the freedom and independence of colonial peoples. We of the Socialist Party, however, have always maintained that changes in constitution such as have taken place in Ghana do not fundamentally alter the class basis of that society: in place of British masters the Ghanaian workers will be exploited by a rising, home-grown capitalist class. Indeed, within a matter of weeks of the showy inauguration of the State of Ghana, there are signs that its rulers are acting much as their well-established contemporaries do elsewhere.

Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah said (*Life* magazine, 15/4/57) that he is convinced that "his newly free citizens will prove that African people can build a state based on democracy . . . and racial equality." But the democratic base of the State of Ghana cannot be very secure, because, according to the *Manchester Guardian* (23/4/57), Dr. Nkrumah said that "His government would not tolerate the activities of certain religious bodies. He cited Jehovah's Witnesses, who, he said, excluded themselves from voting and ignored activities pertaining to affairs of State." Perhaps Dr. Nkrumah has learned the gentle art of suppressing inconvenient minority groups from rulers (past and present) of the "police states" such as Soviet Russia. That the Ghana government is prepared to use force against sections of its people is confirmed by Mr. Ako Adjei (the Minister of the Interior), who was to ask the Ghana Parliament to "approve steps taken by the Government to deal with a recent outbreak of lawlessness in parts of the Trans-volta Togoland region." (*Manchester Guardian*, 23/4/57), which paper goes on to report: "The Opposition has sent a delegation into the troubled area to investigate allegations of brutality by the authorities."

The spectre of the witch-hunt, which has in recent years haunted American political and academic circles under the direction of a notorious senator who has just died, has apparently found a welcome in the newly formed State of Ghana. Mr. D. M. Balme recently

Life for the majority of people in the world today is not a particularly happy one—it is a life of general insecurity, of wars and of want. But, because of historical and social circumstances, life for many of the world's Jews has possibly been more insecure, more unhappy. They have been the victims of periods of persecution and unspeakable atrocities; of mass murder in concentration camps and gas chambers, and of periodic pogroms. For the Jews of Russia, before and after the 1917 Revolution, the picture has been much the same: periods of relative tranquillity followed by pogroms, persecution and the like. For our part we would point out, however, that the solution of the "Jewish question" does not lie in a "Jewish Home"; a State of Israel or a Soviet Birobidzhan; or even mere assimilation into the non-Jewish working-class.

The problems that confront the Jews of Russia—and elsewhere—and other religious and social minorities, can only disappear when the vast mass of people have become socialist in outlook—in a truly Socialist world: not the sham Socialism, or Communism of Russia, and elsewhere we see today.

PETER E. NEWELL.

resigned as Principal of the Achimote University College partly, according to the *Observer* (28/4/57), because of alleged political interference with the University College's academic freedom. In a farewell speech, Mr. Balme declared that "many undergraduates had expressed deepening concern about their future careers in the new State of Ghana. He added that undergraduates had told him that they feared their political activities might bring them into conflict with the country's leaders and jeopardise their opportunities to serve the country."

Dr. Nkrumah boasted that racial equality would be built in Ghana. Maybe, but it's pretty evident that some of his supporters do not believe in building economic equality. According to the *Manchester Guardian* (24/4/57), "The Local Government Minister, Mr. Atta, told Parliament today (April 23) that Accra councillors owed £2,114 to the council at the time of the suspension. Mr. Edusei (the Minister Without Portfolio) pointed out that the majority of the councillors were members of the Convention People's Party—the Government Party." Apparently the Accra Council was suspended "following allegations that it had not collected rates or submitted accounts and had advanced loans to councillors." The rising Ghana politicians seem quick to learn one of the basic mottoes of capitalism, "Blow you, Jack, I'm all right"—sorry, we mean "private enterprise," of course.

The eve of "independence" for the states which have recently broken away from the influence of colonial powers has been the occasion for much celebration by the workers; the dawn has invariably brought the "hang-over" of reality. Workers in Israel, India or Pakistan have no more freedom or less poverty under their own rulers than they had under their erstwhile imperialist masters, and we can confidently prophesy the same about the workers in Ghana. A cartoon in a recent edition of *Punch* neatly sums up the situation. A large, prosperous Ghanaian capitalist waves a banner denouncing the rule of the white capitalist; he is securely seated on the thin shoulders of a bemused Ghanaian worker.

M. L.

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THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

SOCIETY IN 'EFFIGY

AT the Phoenix Theatre, London, Tennessee Williams' play, *Camino Real* (Royal Way), is one of imagination run riot, which is also a plea for imagination and humanity. This is not a story but a nightmare; an allegory of man's inhumanity to man, which we can read back into the world we know. Here, on the *Camino Real*, "the well of humanity has run dry"; here is known only callousness and greed, and those who do not fit in get short shrift. People have no value as human beings and are worth more dead than alive. Poverty is a crime and law is for the property owner and the sharper. On the *Camino Real* the most dangerous word is "hermano"—brother—which unites the masses and creates unrest. The daily ritual of the social myth—the restoration of the virginity of a gipsy girl by the moon—maintains the social equilibrium.

Tennessee Williams' theme is that a world that rejects the humanity of man becomes the horror comic of the *Camino Real*, or, in the words of the play, "a comic strip read backwards."

If the theme is a grim one, it is set in a play nevertheless full of colour, richness and humour. In all, a fascinating circus of life well worth a visit if you've got a few shillings to spare and feel like a tough evening.

I. D. J.

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All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. June 6th and 20th.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6 or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m., at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o. H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (June 5th and 19th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, June 10th and 24th at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney. Sec.: A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m., June 5th and 19th, 108c, Goldhurst Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, c/o H.O., Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7411.

MANCHESTER Branch meets the first Thursday in each month (June 6th) George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.: Sec.: J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. Phone: Didsbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisle, 17, Cotswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Bras," Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, Pelham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

LEWISHAM LECTURES

at

DAVENPORT HALL

Davenport Road, Rushey Green, S.E.6.

on Mondays at 8 p.m.

June 3rd "The Rent Bill" ... A. Ivimey.
 „ 17th "The Cost of Living" ... J. D'Arcy.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

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WE LIVE IN WHAT IS CLAIMED to be a "free country," where there is "free expression of opinion," but this must not be taken literally. It does not mean that anyone can say or write just what he likes. The Official Secrets Act and the libel laws cut off considerable areas of expression, into which you trespass at your peril. Much greater restriction arises because we live in a money world, in which capacity to make views known depends largely on what you can afford to pay. If your resources run into hundreds of thousands or millions of pounds, you can publish the *Daily Worker*, *Daily Herald*, *Daily Express*, etc.: if not you may have to be content with a monthly journal. But what about the possibility of the "free" expression of varied points of view in the columns of those and other journals with the big circulations? This again is a very narrowly circumscribed possibility when it is a question of securing publicity for a minority and not popular point of view, such as that of the S.P.G.B. When daily newspapers misreport matters of concern to us, or when they refuse to publish our letters or advertisements, there is no remedy—and this notwithstanding the existence of the Press Council, which is supposed to keep an eye on the conduct of the Press.

Another approach to the Press Council

In 1956 we approached the General Council of the Press about an incorrect statement (one of many in the Beaverbrook newspapers) that occurred in the *Evening Standard*, followed by editorial refusal to correct it. (The matter in question was the practice of the *Evening Standard* of describing Labour Party conferences as conferences of "The Socialist Party of Great Britain.")

The Press Council declined to interfere, on the ground that readers would not be misled. (See *SOCIALIST STANDARD* January and March, 1956.)

In May of this year we wrote again to the Press Council about the refusal of the *Daily Telegraph* to publish an advertisement of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, the only reason given being that there is no refusal to publish our advertisements on principle, each advertisement being dealt with on its merits.

The Press Council replied on 29th May, 1957:—

"Dear Sir,

"I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of May 27. The question of whether a particular advertisement will be published rests entirely with the Editor, whose decision is absolutely final. It may help you to quote the statement which appears on this subject in *The Times* every day. It reads:—

"All orders for advertising in *The Times* are accepted on the express terms—
(a) that they are subject to cancellation at the discretion of the Editor, etc., etc.

"Yours faithfully,

"(Sgd.) ALAN PITT ROBINS, C.B.E."

Of course, we don't feel at all helped. Either the Press Council approves of newspapers refusing advertisements or it disapproves, and it doesn't add anything to be told that *The Times* does it as well as the *Daily Telegraph*.

The Royal Commission on the Press

The Press Council arose out of recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Press (1947-1949). In the report of that body the question of refusing advertisements was dealt with; though we confess we cannot be certain what exactly the Royal Commission was trying to say. The relevant passages in the Report (paragraphs 529 and 530) are as follows:—

"We consider it entirely wrong for a newspaper to boycott a particular advertiser arbitrarily and for personal reasons."

"We have received evidence that some newspapers refuse all advertisements of a particular class. This is a different matter. We consider that a newspaper has a right to refuse advertisements of any kind which is contrary to its standards or may be objectionable to its readers. This right, however, should not be exercised arbitrarily."

This statement may have the appearance of being both clear and reasonable. It is the last sentence that makes the meaning unclear. The Royal Commission appears to be saying that it would be quite right for the *Daily Telegraph* to refuse all advertisements from the S.P.G.B., because the S.P.G.B. is objectionable to the readers of the *Telegraph*, but wrong for the *Daily Telegraph* to decide, arbitrarily and without giving a reason, to publish some and exclude others: but that is what the *Telegraph* does.

By curious coincidence we received from the *News-Chronicle* an almost directly opposite point of view. Having written to them about a misstatement in someone else's advertisement, a member of the S.P.G.B. received a reply to the effect that of course the *News-Chronicle* could not possibly interfere with statements made in advertisements.

The freedom to express Socialist ideas

The fact is that the possibility of making Socialist ideas known to the population is very narrowly restricted in this country. Newspapers and periodicals almost never give space to the Socialist viewpoint, and letters are comparatively rarely published. With paid advertisements we have somewhat better results, though refusals (sometimes masquerading under "no space available") are frequent. As the Royal Commission on the Press was supposed to be concerned with "free expression of opinion and the accurate presentation of news," they might have been expected to face the issue squarely: instead they sidestepped it by the insertion of the qualifying word "important," (Report, page 676), and considered whether "the Press as a whole gives an opportunity for all important points of view to be effectively presented."

Is the expression of Socialist ideas important? Certainly it isn't with the Tory, Liberal, Labour and other giants of the newspaper and periodical Press.

Not that the Royal Commission found everything to be satisfactory—far from it, and they half-understood the reason. "The failure of the Press to keep pace with the requirements of society is attributable largely to the plain fact that an industry that lives by the sale of its

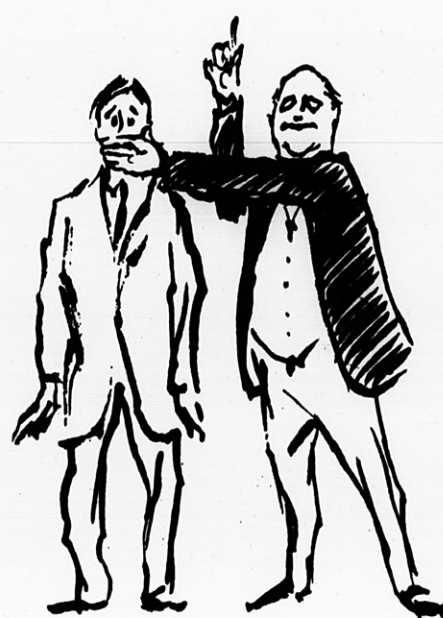
products must give the public what the public will buy. A newspaper cannot, therefore, raise its standard far above that of its public, and may anticipate profit from lowering its standard in order to gain an advantage over a competitor." (Paragraph 680.)

Nationalisation no remedy

We say that the Royal Commission only half understood the nature of the problem. This is amply proved by the fact that they took for granted that publication can only be for the purpose of selling and making a profit—they never considered the possibility that the only way of securing "freedom of expression" is through Socialism, when the question of sale and profit would not arise.

And they are not the only ones who do not understand. A delegate at the recent conference of the Electrical Trades Union, speaking on the Press, said:—

"An end must be put to its reports of sadism, sensationalism and pornography. We shall nationalise this monopoly so that its views shall be that of the working masses for Socialism."—(*Daily Worker*, 7th June, 1957.)



It is difficult to imagine anything more contrary to every experience. We are asked to believe that nationalisation would change the Press into a vehicle for enabling the workers to express Socialist ideas. Let us look at a few facts. Where the Press has passed under direct Governmental control, as in Russia, it is not only impossible to publish a journal putting Socialist ideas for a Socialist organisation, but it is legally forbidden for a Socialist political organisation to exist at all. Secondly, the broadcasting service in this country has been nationalised for 30 years after a five year life of the original British Broadcasting Company. Do we find the nationalised B.B.C. putting over Socialist propaganda? It is in fact even worse than the capitalist Press. For a quarter of a century the S.P.G.B. has tried to get the Socialist case put on the radio, but with never a single success. Not that the B.B.C. says it will on principle not let the S.P.G.B. broadcast—nothing so crude—but each time application is made the application is refused.

One of our adverts. refused by the *Daily Telegraph* mentioned that the S.P.G.B. is barred from the air by the

B.B.C. Those who are silly enough to think that there is some essential difference between the "private enterprise" capitalist *Telegraph* and the State capitalist B.B.C. may wonder why the former didn't jump at the chance

of chiding the latter for its opposition to "freedom of expression." Instead they showed their true affinity by behaving in the same way, suppressing the Socialist case. H.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

The Separation of Ownership from Management (from the "Socialist Standard," July, 1907.)

The logic of events has altered somewhat the character of the opposition that is made to the Socialist. He is now seldom told that the personal management of the capitalist is essential to the working of industry, for it is precisely those concerns in which the personal supervision of the capitalist is lacking that are driving the personally managed businesses to the wall . . .

It is only the small businesses that can, in any real sense of the word, be said to be personally directed, and the small concern is in a parlous way beside the great public company. The large firm is able to considerably reduce the proportion of management expenses by distributing them over a larger volume of work. It is also able to extend the division of labour and to introduce and

suitably employ the most efficient machinery. It is able to buy in large quantities and, therefore, more cheaply; to make consignments of goods in bulk and, therefore, at lower rates, and in many ways both in buying and in selling to overreach its smaller rival . . .

The sweating underground master-baker is out-competed by the eight hours day machine bakery. The struggling tobacconist, tea dealer, and the like, are being crushed by the branches of the great distributing trusts. The small cycle maker is losing ground before the great Coventry companies, and on all sides a similar process is going on . . .

The working class now runs industry to its own misery for the profit of its oppressors, but the day is near when it should take those industries that have been built up with its blood and sweat and transform them from means of profit for a handful of parasites into the means of its deliverance from slavery and degradation.

(From an article "Industrial Democracy.")

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

London Propaganda. A series of indoor meetings are being arranged to be held in many parts of London: it is to be hoped in Ealing, East Ham North, Lambeth, etc., in addition to the meetings held in June at Denison House. More details will appear in the next issue of the *STANDARD*. The Propaganda Committee is planning these meetings on an extensive scale, and the areas affected will be well supported by the local branches. The last of the series will be at the time of the Autumn Delegate Meeting.

* * * *

Ealing Branch has taken over responsibility for the outdoor station at Gloucester Road (8 p.m. on Wednesdays). First experiences have been very encouraging, and meetings have been well attended, with good literature sales. Members are asked to support the branch in this venture, which promises well.

Sunday, 16th June, was a very pleasant and successful occasion for the Branch. A visit was made to the Wallace Collection in the afternoon, followed by a social in the evening at a member's house.

The first propaganda trip this year to Southsea will be taking place in July, and there will probably be a second visit in September.

Will all members note that as many members will be away on holiday during August, it has been decided to close down the branch for three weeks; i.e., 16th, 23rd and 30th August.

* * * *

Swansea. During the Whitsun week-end a London member visited our Comrades in Swansea, the idea being



to hold some outdoor propaganda meetings. Unfortunately the weather decided not to co-operate, but despite a cold, windy evening on Saturday and rain on Sunday, two fairly successful open-air meetings were held. Sixteen current *SOCIALIST STANDARDS* were sold and a number of back issues and leaflets, *Introducing the Party*, were given away. An indoor address was planned for friends and sympathisers, but due to the bad weather only members turned up, and they held a useful discussion on Parliamentary activity.

The week-end, however, was pleasurable and worthwhile. It is hoped to arrange a full week's propaganda before the end of the summer.

The members of Swansea Group are keen and hard-working, and are planning a canvassing drive for the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* in the near future.

* * * *

Wood Green and Hornsey Branch challenged Lyn Mostyn (Labour) and Lady Gammans (Conservative)—candidates in the Hornsey by-election—to appear on the

Socialist Party's platform at Rokesley School, Hornsey, to state their views in opposition to the S.P.G.B.

Mr. Mostyn replied that owing to pressure of by-election work he was busy and could not attend. No reply was received from Lady Gammans.

Neither Mr. Mostyn nor Lady Gammans appeared, although the challenge was published in the *Hornsey Journal*, and our challenge letter had indicated that their representatives would be welcome instead if they were busy.

However the meeting was held by us and was well attended.

Indoor and outdoor (Muswell Hill Broadway) meetings will be held during the summer.

News From Glasgow (City and Kelvingrove Branches).—"We don't deal in emotion and sentimentality; we adopt a scientific attitude," quoted the *Glasgow Herald*. The speaker was Comrade Shaw, addressing an interested audience in Queen's Park Recreation Grounds on May Day. While Comrade Shaw was presenting the revolutionary proposition, Mr. Frank Cousin, the official May Day demonstration speaker, was dishing out the sentimentality in the Bandstand in Queen's Park. Our audience, however showed their appreciation of the scientific attitude by donating £2 for the purpose of carrying on the good work. It was a grand start to a promising May Day. The Glasgow membership were

more active than in recent years, and about 16 members scurried busily about Queen's Park selling literature to the tune of 11 dozen SOCIALIST STANDARDS. The evening meeting was held in St. Andrew's Hall, in opposition to the Communist Party and a Skiffle Group competition. A lively audience of 70 heard Comrades Richmond and Higgins expounding "The Socialist Way Out." Several nights before the meeting the centre of the city was "decorated" with whitewash advertising our activities, but the Fates and the rain were against us.

A fortnight later, at Rothesay, Comrade Richmond, on behalf of the Party, addressed a Week-end School of the Amalgamated Union of Foundry Workers. His subject was "Modern Trends in Marxism." The school consisted of about 40 trade union branch delegates, and provided Comrade Richmond with an alert and interested audience. Socialist literature was sold at the meeting, and the venture seems to have been very successful. This is the first time a Trade Union School has requested a speaker from us, but judging by the amount of interest Comrade Richmond's incisive lectures aroused, it does not seem like the last.

All during May the Socialist Platform has been erected in West Regent Street, where large and interested audiences have gathered to hear the antidote to Capitalist Propaganda. Literature sales and propaganda collections have been encouraging, and there is a possibility of some more members airing their vocal chords there during the rest of the summer. P. H.

THE GOOD ABBÉ

It was recently announced from Paris that the Abbé Pierre, "... known among his followers as 'The Apostle of the Homeless'" has joined forces with the former Brazilian president of United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation, Senhor Jose de Castro, to create a "world organisation to fight hunger."

The announcement added that the organisation would be financed by funds accruing from an international prize awarded to Senhor de Castro some years ago, and from lecture tours to be undertaken by the Abbé Pierre.

We are further informed that the good Abbé has already founded an "international institute for research and action against world poverty," and a "World Abbé Pierre Foundation" to finance it!

We might well wonder what kind of world it would be if we had not the impoverished, the homeless and the other victims of our social disorder to provide rungs on the ladder of fame and/or salvation to the pious reformers who, like the poor under capitalism, are always with us.

Worthy motives of muddled Reformers

But let us not ascribe such unworthy motives to the noble Abbé and those of his kind. Let us assume that they are sincere people, with a constant care for the miseries that beset millions in our unfortunate world. Well might they be shocked, indeed, for capitalism presents us with much that is shocking, even today, after generations of reformers.

As workers, ever close to the miseries which shock our reformers, and Socialists, knowing full well the reason

for such miseries, we must be forgiven if we wonder at the unworldly simplicity of all Abbé Pierres.

Even the poor man himself has been forced to confess that only "miserable results" have been so far achieved in the fight against misery.



Pity the poor reformers! Ephemeral things, they come and go, tampering with the effects of a cause unknown to them; administering social aspirin to a society afflicted by a social cancer. Good people? Of course they are! But in their dealing with the problems that confront the mass of the people they are, to put it charitably, naive.

We cannot believe that any reformer setting himself the task of eliminating poverty, could be so stupid as to seriously hope that they will achieve that end. Rather, we should imagine, do they hope to alleviate small pockets of the misery that so shocks them.

In order to protect themselves from "impostors" it is usual for the charity-giving reformers to make extensive enquiries regarding the depth of social degradation into which the objects of their charity have fallen. It is bad enough to live in a world so organised socially that it is incapable of providing you—often, even if you are the most docile of wage-slaves—with work. To be denied by society the food, shelter and clothing necessary in order to live, is bad enough; but to suffer the pieties, platitudes and preaching of most of the charity mongers and reformers heaps insult on injury.

The pious Abbé is going to spend funds on "research" and "action" against world poverty. We can only hope that such recklessness will not prevail in his broader charitable work, for all the research necessary on the origins of world poverty, and the required pattern of action for its eradication, have long since been known to Socialists. A very little research by the Abbé into Socialist writings will undoubtedly yield the cause of the misery against which he militates. Further persistence will reward him with the solution to such misery.

Poverty, unemployment, bad housing, crime, and the host of other evil social phenomena that continually haunt us all have their groups of "good-does" spending time, money and effort vainly trying to stem the flood of misery, or effect reforms, but these evils remain, strong, virile weeds in the fecund soil of capitalism.

Cause and effects

Capitalism is the basic social cause of all these evils; that which the Abbé Pierres of this world struggle against is but the effects. They fight shadows, the Socialist prefers to get to grips with substance. As Socialists we know that there is only one truly effective "reform," and that is Socialism.

Capitalism, with its private ownership of the

machinery of wealth production, forces on the mass of people a condition of slavery, wage-slavery. All the things necessary to the sustenance of human life become commodities, their use value only incidental to their exchange value. Even our physical energies—our labour power—has a commodity character which, since we are propertyless, we are obliged to sell to the owners of the factories, mills, land, etc., in order to get the wherewith to buy the things we need.

It is a staggering thought that even the humble loaf of bread—the "staff of life" to the masses—is not produced, under our present social system, primarily for the purpose of being eaten. If you have money you can buy all the bread you want, and there is no law to prevent you burning it should you so desire. On the other hand, if you are without money and starving you will go without bread—or beg at the table of an Abbé Pierre!

Order of Priority

Capitalism provides us with hungry millions, surely a reason for unrelenting work, and at the same time with armies of unemployed; capitalism gives us our slums for there is little profit in providing homes for the slaves of the system; capitalism, with its need to protect its foreign investments, gives us wars and their attendant evils.

Even if it were feasible to attack the problems of capitalism singly for the purpose of piecemeal reform, which, of course, it is not, it would be an odious task indeed, placing them in their evil perspective. While you fight slums, war creeps nearer, while you organise peace pledges, slums go unattended, while you are re-habilitating the refugee his compatriots are creating refugees, and so on.

There are no short cuts to Socialism and certainly trying to patch up a bankrupt social system is not progressing. If all those people who are genuinely desirous of putting an end to the evils they see around them actively joined with the Socialist movement, they would put an end to their objection that Socialism is a long way off. Had there been no Labour and Communist parties holding out political carrots to the working-class and no reformers using energy uselessly, then the pious charity mongers would long, since have been compelled to find other means of getting to Heaven and the world might well stand on the threshold of Socialism.

Until that time arrives, I suppose we who know better will see many Abbé Pierres trying to perform the miracle of the loaves and fishes. R. MONTAGUE.

HOW WELL IS THE "WELFARE STATE"?

(Continued from June SOCIALIST STANDARD).

Health in the Welfare State

Those who sing the praises of the European Welfare States and of the land of the highest wages and greatest prosperity—the U.S.A.—seem to be quite unaware of or to deliberately ignore the ugly, cruel, stupid and tragic features which the model states in both hemispheres have in common. In the totalitarian countries behind the Iron curtain where Press and platform do not often dwell on the ugly side of things at their end, and where, therefore, information and statistical data on social affairs are not so easily accessible, ignorance may be excusable, but

this cannot be said of the peoples of countries where books and Press supply the damning facts and figures with critical comment.

The 1955 report of the largest Austrian Health Service, with close on one million insured persons, provides perhaps the clearest picture of the state of health of the people. In that year the service had to deal with half a million cases of illness. Three million sickness certificates had to be issued.

Prescriptions totalled 8,700,000, which works out at 10 per person per year. In each 1,000 insured persons

193 insured persons or members of the family were treated in hospital. 375,000 bills for spectacles, foot supports, artificial limbs, bandages and other accessories had to be paid, 9 million days of illness were registered, and 3 million days in hospitals. There were 672,000 cases of dental treatment.

These are the records of only ONE, though the largest, Health Insurance Fund to which other sick clubs and the private practitioners have to be added. The city's many hospitals and clinics are woefully short of beds and are invariably overcrowded. So are the institutions for the mentally sick. The number of inmates in the Vienna mental institutions and lunatic asylums has trebled since 1950. In that year the largest institution took in 735 persons and in 1955 the number rose to 1192. Even if it is true that alcoholism has a lot to do with it, it must be pointed out that frustration and the hard and nerve-racking conditions under which the mass of people have to live and work are in very large measure responsible for people taking to drink and driving them mad.

In a budget debate it was disclosed that in Austria no less than 4,200 million schillings were spent on alcohol, which is half a milliard more than the year before, and two milliards on tobacco. In Germany the situation is even worse, with nearly 50 per cent. more on both items. How hopeless the problem is for the reformer or the apostle of anti-alcoholism is clear from the fact that prohibition, or even curtailment of the production of beer, wine and Schnapps would involve the loss of 348 million schillings for the government's tax collectors, not to speak of the serious effect on employment. An increase of alcoholism is noticeable in almost the whole world. Sweden has had to take drastic steps to restrict the rapidly increasing consumption of alcoholic drinks. A report says that since the abolition of rationing in 1915, offences and crimes have frightfully increased. If the number of unfortunates who have been and are being driven mad by the iron heel behind the iron curtain, is probably incalculable, the number of persons in mental institutions in the "free world" countries is no secret—it is, for example, 750,000 in the U.S.A.

Crime

This chapter is not intended to deal with such deeds (perpetuated by governments) as training young people in the use of instruments of mass murder and destruction. Whatever can be said about war in the jungle and in the wild and woolly past of the human race it is now and has been for a century already—a crime. True, it is so regarded not only by Socialists, but unless you are consistent in your condemnation and earnestly concerned with the all-important question of the real cause of the dastardly deed and prepared to work, as Socialists do, towards the elimination of that cause, the mere expression of your moral or sentimental indignation remain ineffectual and futile. Thus, with all their professions of peace and desire for disarmament, the welfare states and the totalitarian regimes continue the status quo, with all its contradictions and imbecilities—poverty and misery in the midst of ever-increasing accumulation of wealth and possibilities of enjoyment of life for everybody—in other words: with Demon Capital in the saddle. Whilst chewing platitudes about peace, freedom, sovereignty and social justice, the Labour Government of the United Kingdom brought in the atom-bomb, and in another

welfare state—Austria—it is the very leaders of the "Socialist Party of Austria" who are the chief promoters of a new army. And in order to imbue the young recruits with the necessary fighting spirit, welfare statesmen and writers continue as in pre-welfare days, to give to historical events the bias required by the national (read capitalist) interests. So important is the fostering of that spirit to the powers that be that if for example, there was no "Südtirol question," both Rome and Vienna would have to invent one.

Our purpose in this chapter was, however, to deal with the crimes committed not by order or at the behest of governments, but by individuals driven to desperation and anti-social acts by an anti-social and insane system of society. It is to show that in the welfare state most of the evils inseparable from the money system flourish as abundantly as ever before. Burglaries, robberies with violence, theft and larceny, shocking murders and assaults, cruelties to children, etc., are on the order of the day. In January the leading article in a Vienna newspaper wrote: "With great alarm the public learns that the number of murders and general crimes with violence have for weeks again sharply increased. The excitement about the brutal assault on a postman last Saturday has hardly abated when news comes of a new far more terrible crime. In their tumble-down barracks an old couple was found battered to death and robbed of what little savings they possessed. A youth of 17 was afterwards arrested for the murder." The same paper reported the murder of a 25-year-old wife by her husband. Two boys of 17 and 18 raped and murdered a girl of 15 on her way home. A one-arm invalid killed his wife and six children with an axe. Another man murdered his wife and four children. Six boys stole within a short time 31 autos. "Christmas is the time"—another paper wrote—"in which the number of suicides and attempted suicides is far above the average. Among the many 'tired-of-life' this Christmas was the 40-year-old A. H., who gassed herself and her two children."

It is interesting that within a few days of one paper boasting that Austria was a land without gangsters, there occurred no fewer than three bank robberies in classical gangster style, with autos and the rest (two in the country and one in Vienna), in one of which two young robbers perished. And so one could go on ad infinitum, every day bringing new reports of crime and tragedies. Rarely are they reported in the foreign press, since every country has more than enough locally to fill their own regular columns of police and court reports.

In these unholy and unblest orgies of crime, cruelty and fraud which, by the way, give employment to whole armies of policemen, gendarmes, prison guards, and wardens and executioners, lawyers and judges, reporters and printers and photographers, detectives and special transporters, in addition to experts in safety devices, safe-makers, etc., etc., the annual number of convictions of all kinds over recent years is invariably just over 100,000 in this country, 20 per cent. of which are for criminal killing and assault; the rest are for fraud, embezzlement, blackmail, insurance swindles and other "scandals."

With the Socialist's preference for quoting his

enemies confirming the truth of his statements and criticism, here is what the Austrian Sozialminister Proksch said at a conference of the "Aktion Jugend am Werk" (7/11/1956): "It is the tragic fate of the young about to start a profession, to be faced with unsettled problems. The advisory committee tries to help them in making a decision, but what good is this to them when there are no suitable openings and nobody wants them. It is hypocrisy to accuse youth of being spoiled and depraved when nothing is being done for their professional education. What is to become of a youth who has to wait months and sometimes longer for a chance of an apprenticeship? One must not be surprised if young people eventually become criminals." Remarkable, is it not? that this same Sozialminister should only a few months earlier have declared: "The Welfare State brings welfare to everybody, and with it assures wellbeing to every citizen."

If it will console British readers that things are said to be worse in America, here is what Sir Basil Henriques, former chairman of East London Juvenile Court, said after he had spent 51 days in the U.S.A. discussing juvenile delinquency in 20 cities and 14 States: "Every court where I sat I heard cases which were more serious than any I have heard in my 33 years on the bench." On the television, he said: "I saw nothing but murder, divorce and prison scenes." And if you should happen to get hold of a book "Never Come Morning," by Nelson Algren, you may come to the conclusion that really Sir Basil could hardly have exaggerated.

(To be continued).

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editorial Committee.

In a letter to the June SOCIALIST STANDARD a correspondent who signs himself "History Sixth" puts forward the view that "Marx's philosophy is not more materialistic than Hegel's, and his theory of history not more materialistic than any attempt to account for the historical process by the means of empirical science." He concludes from this that Marxism is logically compatible with metaphysical or religious beliefs.

Because of another opinion he offers; i.e., it is a mistake to call Marx's theory the materialist conception of history, his remarks, quoted above, are ambiguously confusing. Surely to be consistent with such a view he should say not that Marx's philosophy is not more materialistic than Hegel's, but that it is not less metaphysical than Hegel's. Again, when he says Marx's theory of history is not more materialistic than the means of empirical science, we are given no clue as to what he means by the term materialistic as used in the context.

The view that Marx's philosophy is no more materialistic than Hegel's has been put by G. D. H. Cole and others, but I would suggest to "History Sixth" that such a view shows a complete misunderstanding of both Marx and Hegel, and it was certainly not a view shared by Marx himself. Thus, in the second preface to Vol. I of *Capital*, Marx says: "My dialectic method is not only

Accidents at work

The number of accidents at work is rising from year to year. From 1953 with 129,449 accidents, with 422 killed, it rose to 162,500, with 670 killed, in 1956. They do not only bring physical pain for the worker and mental depression (fear of losing his job) of the injured, but also distress to wives and children left behind after the death of their breadwinner. Almost unnoticed in the sensational revolt in Hungary and the Suez conflict, there occurred (in October 1956) the terrible tragedy when a bridge under construction and serving in the building of a dam at the Ottenstein power stations collapsed burying 10 workers under huge blocks of concrete. The accident, coming after the previous year's catastrophe at the Kaprun dam, added its tragic quota to the already great number of widows and to the 25 orphans left behind after the previous disaster. Twelve more children were orphaned on 19th and 20th March when their parents lost their lives in a cycling accident near Salzburg.

So is the tragedy of accidents aggravated under capitalism by an individual having to provide for a number of others (wife, children, old folks) who are, through the breadwinner's death, deprived of the wherewithal to live. Under Socialism, when no individual will be dependent on another individual for his means of sustenance, but when every man, woman and child will be the responsibility of the whole community, any unfortunate accident to an individual will then not involve such tragic consequences to others. (This aspect will be dealt with more fully later in this series of articles.) R.

different from the Hegelian, but its direct opposite." He adds: "Hegel transforms the life-process of the human brain under the name of the idea into an independent subject." He concludes: "With me, on the contrary, the ideal is nothing else than the material world reflected by the human mind and translated into forms of thought."

Even on the question of philosophy, Marx and Hegel never spoke the same language. For Hegel the subject matter of philosophy was to discover a prime mover or first principle in the cosmic process. This first principle was a self-creating self-activating thought process; i.e., God, which proceeded on a higher spiral plane to achieve absolute self-consciousness. Thus, for Hegel, nature, ideas, and that includes the means of empirical science, were but aspects of an underlying and essentially religious reality. Hegel viewed philosophy then as a means of finding out what had happened in terms of a teleological necessity and to show that what has happened could only be what must happen. Men were then but the instruments of a dialectic process. The task of philosophy was not to change the world but to understand its appointed end. Hegel denied that his philosophy afforded any clues as to how the world could be changed. He said: "Philosophy comes too late to teach the world what it should be . . . The owl of Minerva begins its flight when the

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE PROPOSITION THEY WILL NOT CONSIDER

OVER a century ago the famous pamphlet, "The Communist Manifesto," was published, beginning with the words: "A spectre is haunting Europe—the spectre of Communism." It went on to describe the terror that the Communist movement inspired among the rulers of Austria, France, Germany, Russia, etc.

Almost any journalist picking up that pamphlet today would be likely to write about the way these words apply to the world in 1957—but he would be entirely wrong! It is not history repeating itself, but a word being distorted into an opposite meaning.

In 1847 when Marx and Engels wrote about the governments and the ruling class being afraid of Communism, they meant by Communism a movement springing from the workers, having for its aim the overthrow of capitalism and establishment of Socialism. And they meant by Socialism what the S.P.G.B. means today, a system of society in which all people would co-operate in producing articles and services freely for the benefit of all.

It is true that for many years now the governments of half the world, and, above all, the American Government, have been scared by the spectre of Russia and that they call it the spectre of "Communism": which just goes to show how the politicians can hypnotise themselves with words.

Communist Party the enemy of Communism

The Russian Government is controlled by the Russian Communist Party, but the Russian social system is not Communism (or Socialism), and the Russian Government is no more interested in achieving such a social system than is General Eisenhower or General Franco. If the Russian Government were interested in spreading Communism in the world, it would, of course, show its interest by starting at home and introducing

Communism into Russia; but this would mean abolishing the very comfortable privileged position occupied in Russian state capitalism by governmental and managerial circles of the population. Why should they seek to destroy the capitalism that gives them power and privilege and wealth?

Why not be friends with the Russian Government?

Are we saying then that the American Government's fears of, and hostility towards, the Russian Government is based on pure illusion? By no means. American and Russian capitalism have just the same kinds of reasons for mutual hostility and fear as British and American capitalism had in relation to Germany in 1914 and 1939.

Back in the 19th century West European governments feared the Russian dictatorship under the Czars because Russia's ruling class had ambitions to expand into the Middle East and the Mediterranean and into India and the Far East; in all of which regions they clashed with the similar expansionist ambitions of other Powers. Exactly the same rivalries exist today, the main difference being that nowadays the Western politicians say (and seemingly many individuals actually believe) that their clash with Russia has to do with "Communism." What it has to do with is the economic rivalry that capitalism gives rise to between the separate capitalist Powers, of which Russia is now in the top rank, surpassed in power only by America.

If Communism (or Socialism) in the sense of the *Communist Manifesto* were the issue dividing the world today, the Russian Government would be lined up with the ruling class of America, Britain, Japan, India, etc., to crush it.

They never consider Socialism

The Western politicians and Press will give thousands of words and acres of space to the Western case against the Russian bloc and give less but quite a lot of space to those who defend the Russian point of view or argue in favour of seeking compromise with it. But they never on any account give space to considering the case for Socialism (or Communism) in the sense in which the pioneers of Socialism used it and meant it.

But, after all, why should they? Why should the Press take the trouble to answer the Socialist case since nobody (except the S.P.G.B. and its companion parties) ever puts it? When do Gaitskell or Bevan or Bulganin ever put the case for Socialism? Probably all three would (privately) feel embarrassed at trying to prove that society can look to a hopeful future inside capitalism, with its production for sale and profit, the wages system, the continuance of property incomes, investment, competition for markets, etc. But when do they ever say in public that Socialism necessarily means abolishing that capitalist social system?

And as they don't ever say it, the capitalist Press falls into line and happily ignores the case for Socialism.

Labour Party comforters of Capitalism

Mr. George Schwartz, in the *Sunday Times* (9/6/57), picked on the latest Labour Party pension plan as an example of this. He pointed out that the capitalist Press gave much and sympathetic notice to the plan.

"Cos why? Because it is in essence a straightforward exercise in capitalist reasoning based almost wholly on capitalistic methods of calculation and reckoning. Bless you,

I have met stockbrokers who couldn't spell the word dialectic, who have read it with interest and understanding.

"... There is no talk about the annihilating that disreputable trio, rent, interest and profits. There is no nonsense about egalitarianism. On the contrary, the main thesis and principle is that the more you put in the more you take out. In short, chums, it is a stern lecture on the virtues of capitalist attitudes and behaviour."

And the H-Bomb Controversy

It is a far cry from the Labour Party's new scheme for contributory old age pensions to the rights and wrongs of the H-bomb (though there is a certain relationship: if "the bomb must fall," it doesn't seem to matter what pension you might otherwise have been going to get!) In this field, too, the Press will consider every aspect except the Socialist point of view. The *Manchester Guardian* in a frank editorial (3/6/57) tried to face up to the implications of the Bishop of Manchester's demand that the British Government should renounce the H-bomb—whatever the consequences. The editor of the *Guardian* thought that the chances of such an example being followed by general disarmament could be put at about one in ten. The far higher probability would, he thought, be the more or less speedy Russian overrunning of Western Europe and Britain. To the advocates of giving up the H-bomb he put the question:

"Are they prepared to face the agony of living under cannot bring itself to do.

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shades of twilight have already fallen." Hegel's philosophy by its very nature excluded any empirical directive principle as to how the world should be changed.

Marx's views were utterly opposed to such conceptions. He said: "Philosophers have only interpreted the world, our job is to change it." Indeed, Marx's philosophy was not a philosophy in the accepted sense as was Hegel's. Marx was not interested in trying to discover ultimate truth. For him truths were always historical and relative. Metaphysical idealists and religionists hold and must hold that thought is creative. On the other hand, Marx, in line with his own theory, said thought was selective and the manner and scope of its selection was moulded by the material conditions of life. Metaphysical and theological concepts can then have no place in the Marxist scheme.

If Marx had a philosophy it could be best described in his own words as critical materialism as opposed to mechanistic materialism. He believed with Feurbach that critical materialism would mean the end of metaphysics and religion. Again, Marx regarded materialism as the only valid expression of scientific method. Thus, in a footnote on Page 368, Vol. I of *Capital*, he refers to a particular method as the only materialistic and, therefore, the only scientific method.

Marx took the world that is man and his relations with nature as they are. Marx then embraced a thoroughgoing naturalism as opposed to the super-naturalism of Hegel and other religious thinkers. He believed that facts are not more real than they are found to be, and do not express some deeper underlying truth. It was

a Communist system?" Recoiling from this himself, he prefers to rely on the deterrent value of having the bomb.

"The deterrent theory is that on the contrary their use by either side has become less likely. Six big bombs, as has been said before, would be enough to destroy central government in the Soviet empire."

It is not our purpose here to follow the *Guardian* into these muddy depths, but to put a question and a challenge. The challenge is to the *Guardian* to give its evidence for its utterly fantastic statement that the Russian Government behaves as it does because its objective "is a Communist world."

Where does the *Guardian* so hide itself from the facts of capitalist life that it cannot see that the Russian Government behaves like any other expanding Capitalist Power because it is an expanding capitalist Power?

Our question is to ask the *Guardian* why, when it is actually trying to be frank and objective, it can only see the choice between capitalism with the H-bomb and capitalism without the H-bomb: why does the *Guardian* steadfastly turn away from even considering that perhaps after all there really is a case for destroying war at its source in the capitalist foundations of the social system on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Which means considering the case for Socialism, and that the *Guardian*

because Marx collected his facts and organised the knowledge gained from them on the presupposition that he was dealing with a material world, that his theory can be empirically demonstrated. Because Hegel began with metaphysical as opposed to materialistic assumptions he could offer no empirical guide as to the course of history. He could only assure us that a cosmic self-consciousness would come to pass, but how it would do so he is silent. Even in a brief and sketchy analysis of Marx and Hegel, it can be shown that in outlook and method they were worlds apart.

On the question of religion itself, Marx denied that there was some religious essence in man. Religion itself is a product of social life and it only arises when society has reached a certain stage of development in the division of labour. Like all other forms of culture, it can be critically analysed in a specific social situation, and like all other forms of activity it can be shown to change under the impact of changing conditions. While religion had historic justification in the productive rituals of the past, it serves no useful social purpose today.

Marx also denied that man was endowed with a natural religious sentiment, any more than he is naturally endowed with any other aspect of culture. A religious sense is not the outcome of a timeless abstraction, but the product of social consciousness and bound up with a certain stage of social development. To suppose then that any element of supernaturalism could find a place in Marxism is to invalidate the most basic assumptions of historical materialism. For that reason a belief in supernaturalism is incompatible with Marxism. I trust that these remarks might stimulate History Sixth into a reassessment of Marxism.

E. W.

SPECIAL NOTE TO CANVASSED READERS

WE would very much like to know the reaction of you workers whose front doors our canvassers knock on. What you think of our ideas, and in particular our principles.

We know from experience that the first time a Socialist knocks on your door and introduces you to the SOCIALIST STANDARD, it is usually the first time you knew that some party other than the usual ones exist, and we have a lifetime of prejudice to break down before you are prepared to consider seriously the case that we put.

Also, if you have just come home from work and our knock gets you up from your tea, we know the reception suffers accordingly. Add to this children going to bed and the fact we may call on a night when you are broke, we get some slight idea of what Socialist propaganda has to cope with. There is, of course, another reason which brings you to the door in a bad frame of mind, that is when you have been watching television. This is really a shame, because what it amounts to is that those workers are too busy trying to escape from Capitalism to find out how to get rid of it. In face of all the problems such as food prices, rents, clothing, holidays, strikes, war news, and so on, you find it easier after a day's work to laugh at T.V. than to do a little serious investigation about the cause of it all—hence it just goes on.

Are we paid for it?

It is also probable that some of you think that our canvasser sells SOCIALIST STANDARDS for a living. This is not unreasonable, since all kinds of people are everlastingly knocking at your door trying to "sell you something." For our part we get two things out of going round with the SOCIALIST STANDARD, one is tired feet, the other is a sense of satisfaction in doing something to help our class forward to an understanding of their position in the world as wage-workers, because we know it is only from this understanding that the system of work, want and wars will be removed. Yes, like you, our canvasser has done a day's work before he calls; he has the same problems as you, plus Socialist ideas, and he is always prepared to discuss these with you. It is not always possible to stop at one door for an hour, as much as we may like to, as there is more to be done, so please send

us by post any questions, etc., which time on the doorstep does not permit a satisfactory answer to.

We must claim your attention

In the world of today where many millions read one or another of the daily comic papers, does it seem hopeless for you to make any effort, would it be any use if you did? The answer to this is it would make every difference—remember your neighbour is probably just waiting for you to do something, as well; if all leave it to each other, no one will do it. Socialism can only come when enough workers want it, and since it answers your problems as well as ours, you must do your part. Develop the habit of reading the SOCIALIST STANDARD every month, introduce it at work, leave it on a bus; above all, do not resign yourself to the fate that the world as it is cannot be changed. It can be changed. You can most certainly play a part in changing it. First you must understand what needs changing and how to change it. The problems we face all arise from the fact that the means of producing goods and services of all kinds are in the hands of the employers. Because of this profit is society's motive force instead of needs; because of this the struggle for oil and markets, etc., exists, which leads to wars. To send Socialists (not Labourites) to Parliament backed by understanding for the one object of making these means of living the common property of all (see our object) is the only answer. This means no wages, no money, no market, profits or wars, but world-wide co-operation to produce enough and happiness for everyone. Yes, it is worthwhile reading the SOCIALIST STANDARD and getting your fellow-sufferers to do so.

We invite you to attend our Branch meetings, the address of your nearest branch is on the back of the S.S. If you are a member of a trade union, we would be glad to send a speaker to your branch should they be agreeable. You will also find in the S.S. a list of our pamphlets; these are the clearest Socialist statements on the subjects they deal with. We strongly urge workers everywhere to read our case, the result, when enough of you do, will justify the effort. Our canvasser will bring any pamphlets you ask for the next time he calls. We'll be seeing you.

H. B.

CAPITALISM AND THE STATE

A FABIAN myth shared by Mr. Strachey is that increasing state activity, especially on its economic side, is an important factor in changing capitalism into something which is not really capitalism. Like Communists, although for other reasons many Labourites have proclaimed that the system is on its last legs. Unfortunately for such a view, capitalism seems to be a centipede.

State Economic Activity and Capitalism

It may be pointed out that state economic intervention has been a feature of modern capitalism right from the start in the form of state funds for capital projects, subsidies, technical research, tariffs, etc. So far from state intervention being a symptom of the system's old age, it has, on the contrary, been a means whereby the

various capitalist nationals have attained a more vigorous economic life.

That there has been a great increase in state activity in the history of modern capitalism is undeniable. This is due to the fact that the state is bound up with and inseparable from the general activities of capitalism. With the vast expansion of capitalism there has gone a corresponding increase in the activities and functions of the state. Just as the development of capitalism, nationally and internationally, has led to an increase in the antagonisms and tensions not only within the national economies, but between them, this in turn has greatly added to the growth of the weight and complexity of their problems. The state thus comes increasingly to the fore as the one social institution able to cope with

these problems at any adequate level.

Origin of the State

Marxists do not regard the state as part of some eternal dispensation. It can be shown that the state is an historical product and, like all other social institutions, it has an origin and growth. Marxists point out that there have been societies without states, hence society is both logically and historically prior to the state institution. The state as an organised coercive agency does not in fact emerge until the break up of early tribalism, with its primitive egalitarianism, which was brought about by the development of private property relations and its concomitant privileged and unprivileged social classes.

With the division of the community into owners and non-owners of the sources of wealth production, the state as a social power becomes the means of ensuring the continuance of this division against disruption from within, as the result of social conflicts engendered by antagonistic class relations of production and enemies from without. The state thus serves to guarantee the legal titles of those who own the means of production and gives them the right to appropriate the labour of others, be they slaves, serfs or wage workers. In the ultimate instance these legal relations can receive a physical sanction by the control of the state over the armed forces. Thus any class which is the dominant class in a given set of private property relations of production must have direct or indirect access to the state apparatus.

The Struggle for State Power

If since the passing of primitive society history has been the history of class struggles, then these struggles have centred around the attempt to preserve or win state power. Thus an established ruling class will seek to maintain its control over the state machinery in order to perpetuate a social arrangement favourable to themselves. On the other hand, a rising class which aspires to become a new ruling class, will seek to obtain control of the state in order to mould it along the lines of their own interests. This was the position in which the bourgeoisie found itself in its struggle against the old feudal order, although economic development, by placing them in the key positions of the productive process, had given them an advantage over the old class, they found the old social organisation based on an older mode of production, inadequate for a new expanding form of production of which they would be the prime beneficiaries. The need for the control of state power became essential to bring about a social arrangement more accommodating for the extension and widening of the divergent economic powers.

It can be seen then that a particular form of state organisation is the product of a social class or classes which benefit from a particular set of property relations which it is the state's obligation to enforce.

The Meaning of Private Property Relations

When Marxists say that the state is the protector of private property, they mean that it guarantees the class interests of a given set of property relations. But the significance of these property relations do not consist in the mere ownership of things like the possession of a pair of trousers or the tools of an independent craftsman. Capitalist private property relations means a social relation between men, a relation between owners of the means of production and non-owners.

The social relations of production of capitalism are

linked then with a definite class interest which confers upon those who own the wealth resources the right over the disposal of the labour of others. And it is to maintain and enforce these social relations of production that constitutes the primary function of the state.

Reformist View of the State

Marxists point out that class social systems, with their corresponding state structure, are the outcome of social development. They have come and gone, and there are good historical reasons for stating that capitalism, which is the latest of such systems, will also be the last and in turn will give way to a classless and hence stateless social organisation.

While Labour and Fabian theorists accept the fact of the class structure of capitalist society, they do so on different grounds to Marxists. For them social classes and state organisation have always existed and always will. That is why Labour propaganda, although it at times makes veiled references to the injustices of a class society, never advocate the abolition of classes. For them capitalism is part of an eternal dispensation. Their theory is then unhistorical and uncritical.

If, according to such a view, there must always be a class differentiation in the social structure, what purpose does the state serve? Their answer is that the function of the state is to minimise the conflict between the classes to the greatest possible extent, in order to maximise social harmony. On such an assumption the state is not a class organ but a classless agency which exists to reconcile divergent economic interests for the greatest common good. Translated into actual political practice, it is the class collaboration theory of the old political parties, whereby the state serves as a means of seeking to blunt class antagonisms.

Such a view of the state provided an opportunistic springboard for the initial high dive of the Labour Party into politics. Its case against the Tories and Liberals was that it had subverted the true function of the state to act in the interests of the whole of society by taking sides in the use of state power. The side of the rich against the poor; thus using the state for a class purpose. It did not say the rich should not be rich, but that they should not be too rich. It did not say that the poor should not be poor, but that they should not be too poor. Social reforms and taxation were to be the instruments for redressing the abuses of Tory and Liberal rule and so bring about a greater equalisation of what they considered as part of the natural order of things to be a socially unequal situation. Nevertheless, their claim that by redressing social abuses they would restore the proper social balance between the classes, compelled them to pose as champions of the under-dog, and even gave the illusion if not the reality of their being a class party, which in spite of their most strenuous denials to the contrary, they have only recently lived down.

Accepting as they did the contest between Capital and Labour as a social norm, they claimed that they would see it was fought under the Marquis of Queensbury rules. As a genuine third man in the ring, they would see the bigger opponent did not use his weight unfairly or maul in the clinches. They would on occasions even compel him to pull his punches. Nevertheless, they were only too anxious to point out that should the workers attempt to take advantage of the situation, unduly, by pressing their claims too far, it would be necessary in the general

interest of society for the state to seek to restrain them. That various Labour Governments have used this pretext to employ the repressive machinery of the state to curb the demands of various sections of the working class is too well known to need recording here. In the real world of capitalism the state remains the guarantor of capitalist property relations.

The old apologists for capitalism used to explain away its class division as a division between brain and hand. Labourites refer to it as the division between intellectual and manual work. Like the old apologists, they also accept as a corollary of this that great differences in income are part of the natural order of things. Mr. Strachey in his book, *Contemporary Capitalism*, in spite of his pseudo Marxist language, endorses the Labour Party's views on all these matters.

One cannot help being struck by the identity of Labour and Tories social outlook. The Tories also accept class society as part of the eternal dispensation and the state as being the true representative of society as a whole. Thus Burke, Hegel, Comte, John Stuart Mill, and Uncle Tom Cobley and all, find their synthesis in modern political theory.

Labour Party and Social Planning

When the Labour Party speak of social planning they do not imply the controlling and harmonising of the economic resources in the interest of the whole of society. What they mean is the adoption of certain state policies for the better regulation of the forces of capitalism. Indeed, in a system where profit is the ruling motive and anarchy of production an inevitable consequence, social planning in any real sense is impossible.

In the distant past Labourites saw the hope of a socially planned capitalism in the growth of monopolies. So far, however, from monopolies eliminating the anarchy of capitalist production, as was fondly imagined, they on the contrary tend to intensify it, because monopolies seek the pursuit of certain ends, regardless of the requirements of the economy as a whole.

Labour's Changed Views on State Capitalism

Early Fabian and Labour theorists, often ex-civil servants, dreamt bureaucratic dreams of a state directed capitalism. Present day Labourites now see it as a nightmare. They have long learned that private appropriation, the interplay of the market and individual economic calculation are the indispensable norms of world capitalism and hence British capitalism. It knows that a Whitehall capitalism so far from solving present day problems, would only complicate and intensify them. In

fact, the present anarchy of production would be the essence of economic rationalism compared with the organised chaos of a vast state controlled capitalism.

Now the Labour Party and, of course, Mr. Strachey along with them, have no "plans" for taking over capital accumulation. With proper safeguards Mr. Strachey blandly assures us capital investment and the profit motive must still be the unmutated mainspring of his "mutated economy." As Mr. Morrison once observed, the Labour criticism of capitalism was not that the capitalist makes profit, but his inefficiency in failing to make continual profit sufficient enough to justify his existence. This also, it seems, is Mr. Strachey's views.

State Investment

For many years it was fashionable for Labour "experts" to laud state capital investment as an alternative to private investment, and that a planned economy could be achieved by a major intervention in the economic affairs of capitalism via state investment. Such an assumption was utterly unrealistic. Not only would state investment have to compete with private investment, but capital accumulation and profit making would still constitute the mainspring of the system, and the problems of capitalism would remain essentially unaltered. In point of fact, any analysis of modern capitalist countries will show that the state has never assumed any obligation to direct and control capital accumulation, and Labour Governments have been no exception to the rule. What governments have done is to devise policies which seek to aid and maintain capital accumulation. Even social reform legislation, in so far as it succeeds in blunting class antagonisms, has for this reason a bearing on facilitating the smoother path for accumulation.

If capital accumulation, as it can be incontestably shown, is the norm of capitalist society, then it follows that state economic legislation must follow the pattern of that norm. Unless we assume that state policies are designed to undermine and finally destroy this most fundamental feature of capitalist behaviour—the self-expansion of capital. There is not the remotest evidence that the reformist parties contemplate such a project. The state exists then to act on behalf of the aims and objectives of capitalist society. While state policies may modify capitalism, the state can never transform capitalist society, whose creature it is. And it is only transformation that can be equated with significant change.

Whatever changes the Labour Party envisages in capitalism, it always unchangingly assumes capital in eternal control. Something for which the capitalist class no doubt feel eternally grateful. E. W.

SOCIALISM, CAPITALISM AND "H" BOMBS

IN these enlightened days of aspirin civilisation, the reading and listening population of the world are being calmly informed of their own possible extinction either through actual "H" and "A" bomb warfare or as the result of the "peace time" testing of these instruments for "freedom." We read in the *Daily Express*, May 2nd, 1957, that the *New York Times* thinks "that Britain, like the United States and the Soviet Union, can make and stop hydrogen bombs should be a source of pride for Britons."

With the hot-house development of techniques and weapons during the last world bloodbath for profits and

the frantic race for supremacy which has gone on ever since, in making, testing and stock-piling "H" and "A" bombs the public has had information made easily available to it in daily newspapers, radio, etc., at every stage of the process. Apart from the scientific "secrets" which the others are not supposed to know about, over a period of more than ten years everything about "H" and "A" bombs has been told. Although efforts have been made in some quarters to play down the effects, nobody could say they have been kept in the dark. It is a charge which certainly could not be levelled at the various National

ruling classes, that they have suddenly let the workers in on "H" and "A" bombs being produced, like a bolt out of the blue. Maps have been published in national dailies showing the area of devastation. Information about blast, heat, radiation and now strontium 90 has been sent out through all the mass propaganda channels. Millions have watched "H" and "A" bomb explosions, in cinemas and on television. Hiroshima and Nagasaki still bear living evidence. To make it perfectly clear that these things are not toys the experts have likened the explosions to many millions of tons of T.N.T. It has often been stated, by way of example, that all the bombing raids round the clock on Hamburg, Tokio, etc., would be dwarfed in a flash. Yet after more than ten years of this bloodchilling information there is no stir on the part of the vast majority of potential victims. The question which forces itself on our attention, is—why? Why, with all the peace movements, bomb-banning demonstrations, and petitions, do the majority of workers take no apparent interest in something which might exterminate untold millions of them? What is there fundamentally wrong with all these movements that their mass appeals fail to strike home on something so seemingly simple.

In our unravelling of the above questions we hope workers will see that this is an urgent appeal for action, but of a different and more rewarding kind.

Some of the arguments of the anti-"H" bomb movements begin with the plausibly-sounding statement that "war is the most urgent of problems, so it must be solved first. You cannot work for Socialism if you are dead." Next comes "the 'H' bomb is the most deadly of war weapons, so first our activity must be turned to getting rid of that." Some of these people, namely, those in the so-called Communist Party, have a remarkable capacity for believing that only those "H" and "A" bombs not possessed by Russia are harmful.

One of the effects of this approach to the war problem is that it helps to produce an attitude of mind where, because of the sheer dread of "H" and "A" bombs, war, if only they are banned, could be so heavenly. It is obvious from the start that movements which seek to ban this or that particular weapon are resigned to the continuation of wars; in fact, such activity could truly be described as "getting procedure laid down." Is war really more acceptable to the working-class if "H" and "A" bombs are not used?

We claim that the S.P.G.B. and its companion parties have the only real case against war. This must be thought about by workers not as a cheap bit of "pushing the party," but as a serious statement, which, we think, all the evidence upholds.

When workers hear or read the appeals to ban the bomb, their reaction is one which has already been strongly conditioned. Conditioned by the fact that, whatever country they live in, they are taught to think as nationalists. Conditioned by the patriotism of "loyalty to the country." Nationally they see their rulers' interests and their own as one. They are British, American, Russian, and so on. To nationalistic people, leaders (political and religious) flags, armed forces and weapons of all kinds are quite necessary in the interests of the "country." Seeing no difference between themselves and the boss, they argue "if we don't make it, they will," "it's no use this country disarming if the others don't," forgetting that the

misguided patriots in the other countries argue in exactly the same way, i.e., not as workers, but as Germans, Americans, Africans, Russians, and so on. Because of their nationalism they all make the same mistake, the mistake the boss teaches them to make, that is, to speak of "we" and "our country." The all-important fact is, of course, that workers do not possess any country, and the convenient little "we" makes them identify their interests with those who do. To nationalists the world is not divided up into a world-wide working class and a world-wide capitalist class with mutually antagonistic interests; it is divided into "us" and the "foreigners."

What could be more telling of the futility of the "peace" movements and the bomb-banners than the fact that they appeal to nationalism and claim to be the real patriots. Thus they directly help to foster the very outlook without which war would be impossible.

It becomes clear that while the majority of workers in each country feel allegiance to its rulers, and through them to the capitalist class which lives on their backs, these Governments, politicians and parsons will be able to prepare the workers for war, make and test "H" bombs or do any thing else on the ground of "national interest." There must, then, be something more than just not wanting the bomb. There must be understanding by the majority of a really workable alternative. It is precisely this which is lacking among the peace screamers, all of whom accept capitalism (consciously or otherwise), but seek to avoid its normal consequences. The alternative for anyone who has thought about what they have just read is implied in what has already been said, that is, a world without nationalism, commerce and conflicting trading interests. A world no longer divided either into nations or classes of rulers and ruled, but a world community, the whole planet being run to satisfy the needs of its population and no longer for profits. With the industrial and natural resources being held in common by all, mankind would co-operate to produce and freely distribute the things they need. Because the very basis for international conflicts will have gone, wars cannot arise. From that it follows as a matter of course that there will be no bombs to ban, society will not be making them nor any other instrument of destruction. Armed forces will not exist under Socialism because their function will have gone when capitalism goes.

This is about the time when in arguing our case by word of mouth, our opponents say, "yes, it is a nice dream but how and when will it come about?" The answer to this has been given by the S.P.G.B. since its inception. It will come about when you (the opponents) cease to think that solutions to working class problems can be found within capitalism. Never mind about calling Socialism a dream; until you accept it and help others to do so, you are stuck with the nightmare of capitalism.

When a majority of the world's workers (all suffering the same problems under the same system) have come to the conclusion, after making the tour of the blind alleys, that Socialism is necessary, the "how" will be fairly easy. They will no longer vote for and support the parties of capitalism, Labour, Liberal, Conservative and so-called Communists, etc.; they will use their votes to send Socialist delegates forward in each country for the object of stripping the capitalist class of the thing which makes them a capitalist class, that is, ownership (State or private) of land,

factories, mines, machinery and railways, etc. With this done and the means of production in the hands of the

community and democratically controlled, society will begin anew. H. B.

FREEDOM—THE OLD AND NEW JOKE

THERE has been a rumpus in Parliament over the tapping of a barrister's telephone conversation with a solicitor and the passing on of the transcript to the Bar Council.

In defending the action the Home Secretary stated that this power is used "solely in cases involving the security of the State or for the purpose of detecting serious crime." And who is the judge? The Home Secretary, of course, who has to give the permission. What a lot can be covered by "security of the State"! The opening of letters, for instance, for the alleged purpose of seeing if dollars are being smuggled, or tickets for the Irish Sweep.

But this is a "freedom-loving country," as free as it always was. In the middle of last century the correspondence of Mazzini, the Italian patriot, was opened on the same plea. But we can go further back still.

On the 26th April, 1817, *The Scotsman* had an editorial article, from which we have extracted the following:—

"In this island, we have no inquisition to make out lists of books which it is unlawful to read. Our Ministry, although it seems to have the wish, has, fortunately, no power to imitate the example of these Holy Fathers and Familiars, with ropes about their waists. It has not yet got the stock of national reflection put under lock and key; nor can it take its stance before the storehouse of literature, and deal out ideas and information by the ounce, and the drachm, and the scruple; or repulse with a tyrannical frown such as appear discontented with the small pittance of mental food allotted to them. Thought is here free, and has been so long free, that it can never be gathered in, or monopolised any more. The mind cannot be stripped of its acquisitions, nor ideas prevented from generating other ideas, unless it was possible to blast the whole nation with a sudden stupidity."

Now, that sounds good, doesn't it? But wait a

minute. In other columns of the same issue of the paper there were complaints about the incidence of the Seditious Meetings Bill, and a report of proceedings under this Bill, in which a debating society was refused a licence to hold debates, although it was pointed out that these debates on literature and philosophy had been carried on peaceably.

As a further instance of the freedom to put forward ideas the same paper for May 17th, 1817, is also interesting. Here is an extract:—

"On Thursday the important question was to be put to Ministers, whether it is their intention to move for the continuing the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus* Act. The answer will produce the most lively sensation in the country; for, in comparison with this, all other topics are of little account. It is in vain to say that the country is disturbed. All pretences of a domestic nature are done away; for there are not signs of sedition, but clamorous beggary, the result of distress, or of pillage from despair. The *Spencean* system (by which is meant the division of lands and goods among all classes of the community) is rapidly taking place, by the reduction of the higher classes to the middle state, and the middle to pauperism. The process is gradual but unrelenting. Every day brings us all nearer to one level; and if we continue in the blind policy of applying such remedies to the national evil as the suspension of the *Habeas Corpus*, and enacting the gagging laws, the result cannot be mistaken.—We must sink into common ruin."

The boasted freedom of thought seems to have been taking a walloping!

The latter part of the quotation is almost an echo of what we hear to-day. The rich are becoming poor—well, apart from its millionaires, the attenders of luxurious banquets and "coming-out" parties, the patrons of luxury cruises, and the like. After all, a Rothschild who has just died only left £11,000,000.

GILMAC.

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING

We Told You So

"We in the Labour movement feel it is time we had a look at what we have set up. When the coal industry was nationalised we felt that we were setting up Socialism in this industry, but we now discover that what we have introduced is simply state capitalism."—Mr. G. Moir (Paisley) at the Co-operative Party conference, reported in the *Manchester Guardian* of 23/4/57.

A Child Communist's Guide to Democratic Centralism

"In this struggle has evolved the principle of democratic centralism, which combines democracy and centralism, both essential in our organisation.

"Democratic centralism is centralism on the basis of democracy, and democracy with centralised guidance."—Mr. John Mahon, at the Communist Party Congress, reported in the *Daily Worker* of 22/4/57.

The People's Flag is Deepest Red, White and Blue

"If we have been too uncritical of the Soviet Union in the past, it does not alter the fact that we are the most British Party in politics today."—Mr. John Gollan, at the Communist Party Congress, reported in the *Daily Worker* of 22/4/57.

Capitalism and Human Needs—1957

Food Shortages every year American help for India

"Every year there is a famine in India somewhere, and some people go without enough cereals to fill half a handful, and are reduced to digging the ground for tubers and scratching trees for bark..."

Too Much Wheat in Australia Cannot find market

"The Australian wheat industry faces the worst marketing trouble since the depression of the 1930s, the chairman of the Australian Wheat Board, Sir John Teasdale, said today (April 24)..."

[Beginning of two adjoining articles in the *Manchester Guardian* of 25/4/57.]

HACKNEY BRANCH — ECONOMICS CLASS

Wednesdays, July 3rd, 17th and 31st and fortnightly thereafter at 8 p.m.

Co-op. Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8.

Tutors: W. Read and E. Wilmott.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Patrick Boylan, 115, Walkinstown Drive, Walkinstown, Dublin, Eire.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, 11, Faneuil Hall Sq., Boston, 9, Mass., U.S.A.

The *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, *WESTERN SOCIALIST* and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

PUBLICATION DATE OF "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

In order that copies of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* can be on sale in the Provinces on the first day of the month, it has been decided to have it printed several days earlier. This requires that articles shall be delivered to the Editorial Committee at Head Office not later than the 14th of the month. Notices of meetings must also be sent in earlier than in the past, though it will sometimes be possible to secure their insertion later than the 14th.

LETTERS FROM READERS INVITED

Our Annual Conference in April decided that a section of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* be reserved for letters from readers as a regular feature. Readers are invited to send letters of comment and criticism and questions for answer. Letters should be kept as short as possible as space is limited, and the shorter the letters the larger the number that can be printed. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ...	11.15 a.m.—2 p.m.
	3.30—6 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich ...	8 p.m.
East Street (Walworth) July 7th	12 noon
" 14th	1 p.m.
" 21st	11 a.m.—1 p.m.
" 28th	11 a.m.
Whitestone Pond (Hampstead) ...	11.30 a.m.
Finsbury Park ...	11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Lincoln's Inn Fields ...	Tuesdays & Fridays
Finsbury Pavement ...	Tuesdays
Tower Hill ...	Thursdays at 1 p.m.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

LETTER TO A GEORGIA MOTHER

This film, made by the American Agricultural Workers' Union and recently shown at Head Office, gives a shocking picture of America's four million unorganised migrant workers, who travel up and down America following the crops, and eke out a miserable existence picking peaches or pulling potatoes.

Their periods of employment are irregular and their wages low. The accommodation provided by their employers is usually primitive and often disgustingly inadequate. The film showed dozens of negro workers sleeping side-by-side in a two-roomed shack, and whole families who cook, sleep and live in tiny wretched tarpaper huts.

Of course, it is the Negroes or Puerto Ricans who are the worst-treated, but even the condition of the whites is not to be envied, as anyone who has read *Grapes of Wrath* will appreciate.

This kind of film provides a useful rebuff to the usual Hollywood effusion in praise of the good life that America offers its citizens, and there is surely a moral to be drawn from the fact that in "the land of the free" the workers who have the misfortune to be unorganised and unprotected are viciously exploited in appalling conditions.

A. W. I.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Benzie Road, Dundee.

EDINBURGH. Enquiries to A. Hollingahead, 39, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh.

OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Less, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5163.

REDHILL AND REIGATE DISTRICT—C. E. Smith, 88, Chart Lane, Reigate Surrey.

SWANSEA—Enquiries to V. Brain, 17, Bryn a Wellon Rd., Pencoolgi, Nr. Llanelly

Copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD are on sale at the newspaper stands as named below. Members and sympathisers are asked to buy from these stands when possible:—

"THE BLACKSTOCK": Finsbury Park. (Sunday morning).

"PRINCES HEAD": Battersea Park Road. (Daily—mornings).

GREAT PORTLAND ST. Tube Station: (Sunday morning).

"RED LION": Kingsbury Rd., Hendon. Sunday morning).

RUSSELL Sq. Tube Station: (Daily).

SHEPHERDS BUSH Tube Station: (Daily—morning).

WIMBLEDON Stn.: (Daily—morning).

WEALDSTONE Station (Sunday morning).

KENTON Station (Sunday morning).

HAMMERSMITH—King Street. (SMITH'S (not W. H.) Newsagents).

HOLLOWAY: Paper shop, D. Johnston, Brecknock Road.

FINSBURY PARK STATION: Main paper stall.

NAG'S HEAD, HOLLOWAY: Main paper stall.

HIGHBURY CORNER: Main paper stall—station.

COLLIERS WOOD: Underground Station (Daily—morning).

HIGHBURY BARN (Paper Stall) Highbury Park, N.5.

Also from Booksellers as under:—

The New Stores, 10, Coptic Street, W.C.1.

Herbert's Cigar Stores, 39, Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1.

Callett's Bookshop, Charing Cross Road, W.1.

GLASGOW.

SOCIALIST STANDARD, *Western Socialist*, *Socialist Comment* on sale at:—

Collett's Bookshop, 204, North Street (opposite Mitchell Library).

McLarens—Booksellers, 268, Argyle Street (corner Hope and Argyle Streets).

McDonald's—Newsagents, 117, Maryhill Road (corner Cromwell Street and Maryhill Road).

PUBLIC MEETING

AT

EALING TOWN HALL, W.5

at 7.30 p.m. on

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31st

"REARMAMENT and DISARMAMENT"

Admission Free Questions and Discussions

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. July 4th and 18th. No Meetings in August.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: G. Gundry, 20, Love Lane, Bexley, Kent.

EALING meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Baling Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCELS meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o. H. O. 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. R. Reid, 35, Eldon Street, Glasgow, C.3. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (July 3rd and 17th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, July 8th and 22nd at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale, Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney. Sec.: O. James, 56, Weymouth Terrace, E.2.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m., July 3rd and 17th, 108c, Goldhurst Terrace, (near) Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 111, Upper Tollymore Park, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOI 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

MANCHESTER Branch meets the first Thursday in each month (July 4th), George & Dragon Hotel, Bridge St.: Sec.: J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. 'Phone: DIDbury 5709.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grisle, 17, Colswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae," Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Striding House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, Priham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

PUBLIC MEETING

AT

LAMBETH TOWN HALL (Large Hall)

(Corner of Acre Lane, Brixton)

at 7.30 p.m. on

MONDAY, JULY 15th

**"WAGE FREEZES AND
RENT INCREASES"**

Admission Free Questions and Discussion

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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No. 636 Vol. 53 August, 1957

The "Clean" H-Bomb

TINKERING WITH THE COST OF LIVING INDEX

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

DO HIGH PRICES PREVENT UNEMPLOYMENT?

FIFTY YEARS AGO

HOW WELL IS THE WELFARE STATE?

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

4

BUT FOR THE SOBERING THOUGHT that the world is governed by these dangerous clowns, the antics of the politicians over the H-Bomb would be riotously funny. Solemnly swearing that they, one and all, had no slightest intention of going to war, America, Russia and then Britain perfected the atom bomb and the H-Bomb to deter the other side from starting anything. At the same time they all assured us that if they actually started an H-Bomb war it would destroy the human race by the combined effects of the explosive destruction and by the fall-out, which would so poison the atmosphere as to make life impossible; which, if true, meant that, short of an all-round morbid desire to destroy themselves along with everybody else, the politicians dared not use their deterrent. One group might gloat over the prospect that "six big bombs . . . would be enough to destroy central government in the Soviet empire," but it could hardly escape their notice that another dozen lobbed off in the opposite direction would simultaneously put paid to government in Europe and U.S.A.

Nice old-fashioned war

The perfection of nuclear weapons had, of course, already inspired a frothy campaign among allegedly wiser rival politicians, churchmen and "peace-lovers" calling upon the governments to abandon these caddish devices altogether so that war could be conducted with old-type, friendlier, conventional weapons. This started a new controversy with Bishops on both sides. Some argued that the greater evil is "atheistic Communism," and to fight it we must be prepared to use the Bomb; others said we must forswear the Devil's weapons no matter what the consequences, because to use them might destroy the human race. (It was only a rank and file Christian who intervened to point out that as Christians value the spirit not the body, destroying the bodies of the human race is not important anyway).

Stop the tests and keep the bombs

Then it was realised that even without the use of bombs in war, the peace-time testing of bombs had its horrors too. So the campaign was switched to a demand that the tests be suspended. Mr. Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the Labour Party, endorsed this fatuity in a speech at the Vienna conference of the "Socialist International":—

"Mr. Hugh Gaitskell today called for a separate agreement, not tied to a general disarmament pact, to stop atomic and hydrogen bomb explosions. It would be wrong, he told the Socialist International here, to make the suspension of tests dependent on a ban on nuclear weapons, although Socialists wanted this too." (*Daily Herald* 4/7/57)

The "Clean" Bomb

But in the meantime American scientific experts claimed that they were on the way to producing "clean" bombs without serious fall-out (hotly disputed, of course, by other scientific experts). This highly gratifying achievement (about as consoling as "to tell a man in danger of having his head chopped off that the axe will at least be clean," said the *Daily Telegraph*, 6/7/57) was marred by the further disclosure from the first group of scientific experts "that a continuation of tests is essential not only to the perfection of a "clean bomb," but to the maximum benefits to be derived from the peaceful uses of atomic energy." (*Times*, 27/6/57.)

So we are asked to carry on progress towards destroying the human race because in the long run (if there is any long run) there may be benefits from the peaceful use of atomic energy; provided, of course, that there isn't another world war with conventional weapons, which would more than swallow up all conceivable economic gains from atomic energy.

But to make it more farcical the *Washington Post* reached the logical conclusion that as it is to the advantage of all people everywhere that they should not be injured or destroyed by "dirty bombs" in another war, it is equally to their advantage that the enemy should wage such a war with "clean" bombs; and that consequently America, having the know-how about the production of clean bombs, should hand over information about their production to Russia and any other country. (*Manchester Guardian*, 9/7/57.) (And to think that there are a number of spies and traitors languishing in jails for doing this sort of thing a little prematurely!)

But do not be hasty in counting your blessings

But before we rejoice about the great superiority of the "clean" over the "dirty" bomb, we must pause to consider another disquieting view, voiced by the Editor of the *Daily Telegraph* (6/7/57). He fears that with the removal of the threat of universal destruction in a dirty bomb war, the Powers are more likely than before to go to war with clean bombs. (After America had set them all up with clean bombs, as the *Washington Post* believes). The *Telegraph* writes:—

"What are the likely strategic and political implications of this new development? First, that war might once again become a conceivable instrument of policy. A war fought with clean H-bombs would do a vast amount of damage, but it would not destroy the human race, whereas the radiation effects from a similar number of dirty bombs very possibly would. Clearly, therefore, if war must come, it will be of inestimable advantage that it should be fought with clean bombs. But the whole of Western policy to-day is based on the deterrent value of the dirty bomb. For this deterrent purpose the dirty bomb would seem far more effective than the clean. It is precisely because the dirty bomb is so uncontrollable—as likely to poison the country that used it as the country against whom it was used—that no one to-day is likely to risk thermo-nuclear war. Is it not possible that the clean bomb, by making war less terrible, will make it more likely?"

Now the "Fall-out" without The Bang

But that is not all, for America claims to have a new type, radiological weapon, which emits the radiation without the blast and which would dispose of the people in factories and industrial areas without destroying the property.

"For some time consideration has been given to the possibility of using radio-active material deliberately as an

offensive weapon in what is called radiological warfare. The basic idea is that radio-active contamination of areas, factories, or equipment would make their use either impossible or very hazardous without accompanying material destruction." (*Manchester Guardian*, 13/7/57.)

It is assumed in American official circles that the Russians already have this too.

Futile opponents of war

When, half a century ago, the S.P.G.B. asked the workers to recognise that capitalism causes war through its economic rivalries in the lust for profits and markets, and only the abolition of capitalism and establishment of Socialism will abolish war, this was met with the argument that as Socialism could not be achieved in a short time, it was better to concentrate on immediate, smaller social issues, and on the abolition of war. Well not quite the abolition of war (because these Labour Party opponents of the S.P.G.B. had to admit that there was force in the contention that war would continue as long as capitalism), but at least its amelioration: let us try, they said, to abolish the more dreadful weapons, and generally humanise it. Let us support the Red Cross abolish the blockade and all attacks on civilians and see that prisoners of war are well treated—this was their line, and what has come of it? Every decade has seen new and more terrible weapons, and as each came along the same pathetically futile campaign has been organised to ban it—submarines, bombing planes, tanks, poison gas, incendiary bombs, germ warfare, napalm, atom bombs, H-Bombs—and all along the only real changes in weapons have been dictated not by the organised campaigns, but on purely technical and military considerations.

Decline and Fall

How far the Labour Party has declined from its illogical but at least well-intentioned position of the past is shown by the pitiful demand for stopping H-Bomb tests. (Incidentally it was the Labour Government that built the British atom bomb and started the H-Bomb and launched the £1,500 million a year rearmament of 1951). At the Vienna Conference in July Mr. Gaitskill remarked: "Before 1914 the Socialist International was a pacifist, revolutionary organisation. That is neither relevant nor practical today." (*Reynolds News*, 7/6/57.)

His view of the International as it was in 1914 is certainly not warranted, except that the Labour Party's own past must seem "pacifist" and "revolutionary" by comparison with recent and present policies of the Gaitskells and Bevans. In Mr. Gaitskill's eyes not being pacifist or revolutionary is commendable and practical. Yet if we apply the test of being practical to the Labour Party's belief of 50 years ago that war should be tackled as a first step and Socialism left for the distant future, what has it achieved? The gain has been nothing at all the world is even more of a savage jungle of rival capitalist states than it was then. They put the thing in the wrong order. You cannot humanise war anyway, and you cannot abolish it except by coming back to the Socialist insistence on getting rid of the cause of war—capitalism. The only way to stop war—to get Socialism.

H.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Bloomsbury and Ealing Branch Meetings.—Bloomsbury Branch will not be meeting during August as Conway Hall is closed for that month. Meetings will re-commence in September on Thursdays the 5th and 19th. Ealing Branch will meet on Fridays, August 2nd and 9th, only during the month owing to the holidays of Branch members. From September 6th the Branch will meet as usual each Friday.

May Sales Drive.—The Literature Sales Committee report that nine branches made a special effort to sell the May STANDARD, and 5,000 copies were sold. The Committee is planning ahead and look forward to even more successful results in their future sales drives.

Indoor Meetings

The Indoor Propaganda season is well under way, and four of the projected six indoor meetings have already been held—one at Denison House, entitled "Russia—Success or Failure?" and a further one at Islington Co-Op Hall on "Labour's Social Insecurity." Comrades Wilmot, Fahy, Grant and D'Arcy were the speakers at these meetings.

The Lambeth Town Hall meeting on "Wage Freezes and Rent Increases" was held on the 15th July, and Comrades Reed and R. Critchfield were the speakers. The meeting at Ealing Town Hall held on 31st July, subject "Rearmament and Disarmament," had Comrades May and La Touche as the speakers.

The Propaganda Committee organised a further meeting at the Chorlton Town Hall, Manchester, on the



21st July. Comrades Wilmot, Coster and D'Arcy dealt with the subject "Wage Freezes and Rent Increases."

No indoor meetings are planned for the month of August, but a further meeting will be held at the East Ham Town Hall in mid-September, and finally the closing meeting of this present series, in October, will be at Denison House. The Propaganda Committee have already a very heavy programme for the winter, which will be submitted for E.C. approval, but the present intention will be to maintain at least two meetings per month, apart from whatever Branches individually arrange.

The support of all members and sympathisers is required wherever these meetings are held, not forgetting the necessary donations which are urgently required to keep the programme running.

Comrade Gilmac is making a visit to America, and will attend the conference of the World Socialist Party in September as a fraternal delegate of the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

P. H.

MR. HUTCHINSON INVESTIGATES

Is Britain great? And why are so many workers considering emigration as something of a solution to their problems?

Firstly, British capitalism, although still a world power, is second rate in comparison with the giants of the United States and the Soviet Union, which is nothing, as far as workers are concerned, to get hot under the collar about. The once mighty British Empire bestowed no benefit on British workers; likewise American and Russian "greatness" on their workers.

As for the increasing flow of emigrants to the New World and Australasia, again the reasons are hardly secret—the chance of higher wages, a supposed solution to housing difficulties, etc.—all very much facets of working-class life.

However, Mr. Harold Hutchinson, of the *Daily Herald* (4/5/6 March), in a series of three articles, goes in for some soul searching on these very questions. Not surprisingly, being a reformist, Socialism is not mentioned, let alone defined; Mr. Hutchinson's horizon does not go beyond capitalism—although he no doubt prefers a "modified" capitalism—with all of its inseparable paraphernalia, i.e., buying and selling, rent, interest and profit, export drives, together with the necessary trade routes, spheres of influence and strategic points. Presumably, this

is considered perfectly natural, his task being the futile attempt to knock off some of the rough edges.

The Greatness of Britain

In his first article, Mr. Hutchinson makes great play of British industrial and commercial resources and contributions to technological progress. He instances British lead in atomic power, the fact that the chemical industry is the largest in Europe, the British rôle in quality motor car production, aviation, shipbuilding, etc., and that London is still the world's commercial centre. All very interesting and, no doubt, factual, but although the working class make all this possible, they neither own nor control these wondrous means of production and distribution—any more than did the chattel slaves of Ancient Rome own the vast resources of the Roman Empire.

The workers who do not own Great Britain

As Mr. Hutchinson well knows, the only way workers can scratch a livelihood, here and elsewhere, is by the sale of their labour power. Divorced, through personal or social circumstances from their pay packet, they are, in most cases, immediately dependent on sick clubs, etc., or on meagre State aid, the British atomic lead notwithstanding.

Most workers do not even own their "houses," which

is why there is widespread concern over the Tory Rent Bill. Those who do affect to "home ownership" have a working-life long mortgage around their necks.

Let an old age pensioner or disabled ex-Serviceman declare to the Assistance Board that he is a part owner of the British Empire, and see how far he gets!

Welfare Capitalism

In his second article, Harold Hutchinson admits that in spite of British capitalism's so-called Welfare State the social system is virtually unchanged, which does not say much for the Party that he supports—the Labour Party.

He contends that present day society—he does not call it capitalism, of course—is based upon the education system, and survives as a result of it. The reason for this conclusion is not stated. Capitalism is based upon the class ownership of the very means of life, upon the economic fact that about 10 per cent. of the population own the factories, mines, mills, transport, etc., nationalisation notwithstanding.

It is obvious that workers are conditioned during their formative school years to accept the status quo, but this cannot be attributed to any peculiarities of the British education system as such; working class support for capitalism is not confined to those lands with Etons and Harrows, or those with monarchies and remnants of the landed aristocracy.

The Role of Education

Again, the factors making for this acceptance of the system that exploits them, are not confined to "education." The mass means of communication which the ruling class has at its disposal is of paramount importance, not least of all the *Daily Herald*. (Quite apart from the presentation of "news" the constant circulation-boosting prize competitions which that and other papers engage in foster the idea that property owning is natural and desirable. It also at once clearly demonstrates the essential poverty of the working class.)

It is utterly useless to look for changes in the school system as a means of undermining capitalism, because although the blatant privileges of the so-called public school system may eventually give way to an apparently more democratic one, by and large this would be dictated by the needs of an increasingly technical (and competitive) economy. In no circumstances would the powers that be permit a curriculum that was not in keeping with their class interests. The overhaul of their education system is at the moment somewhat of a headache to them, trying as they are to maintain their hold on colonial possessions, finance, a large armament programme, and at the same time pay for technical education.

Socialist education—that is an examination, understanding and resultant rejection of capitalism and the realisation of the need for a revolutionary change in society—is quite another thing. However, that is not what the *Herald* man had in mind.

America the model

Mr. Hutchinson then moves from education to economic affairs and bemoans the lack of real competition in this country owing to the emergence of cartels and price rings. He looks with somewhat envious eyes at—as he says—the "really competitive system in the United States" (where General Motors control about 60 per cent. of motor car production and anybody can set themselves up in business producing cars, because, after all, there are no price rings to impede you—cos they're illegal.)

The efficiency of production in America is lauded, not called exploitation, of course, and with it the fact that American workers have more gadgets around them than the workers of other lands; to Mr. Hutchinson this is known as the world's highest standard of living. It would probably spoil the picture to mention that the workers across the Atlantic suffer the highest rate of exploitation, that American capitalism gives rise to the world's highest crime rate, and that the stresses and strains of the "American way of life" produce a phenomenal divorce rate and neurotic problems.

Perhaps Mr. Hutchinson would regard these as separate entities, completely unrelated to propertied class society.

Incidentally, the *Herald* itself, in an article several months ago, pin-pointed the "tranquillizer" drug craze in the United States, and to a more limited extent its advent in Britain, but that is past news now. Anyway, one of Mr. Hutchinson's colleagues wrote it.

No matter where you live

Fellow workers, capitalism is world-embracing. Whether you choose to stay in this country or to emigrate, basically your position will remain unchanged, exploited in order that others may live in idle, parasitic comfort, continually threatened with economic crises and war, directly resulting from the competitive system which is held in such esteem by capitalism's apologists.

Therefore whether you remain in Britain or decide to "make a go of it" across the seas (or, maybe, you are an immigrant to this country) how about giving a much-needed hand for Socialism, with a view to embarking upon the greatest adventure of all time, the fashioning of the world anew. This will mean the end of the profit motive, to be replaced by production solely for use, arising from the common ownership and democratic control of the earth's bounteous natural and industrial resources. Not competition but co-operation. We will then cease to be wage slaves, mere hired (or fired) hands, but free and equal human beings.

On a basis of Socialist understanding, this world is within our reach. What are we waiting for?

F. SIMKINS.



"Nothing wrong with me that can't be cured by a bit more work from you chaps"

Do High Prices Prevent Unemployment?

We have received the following letter. Our reply follows:

Editorial Committee.

Welwyn Garden City, Herts.

The propaganda of the Labour Party is to the effect of trying to bring down the Tory Government because of rising prices and the Tories' election promises. The Labour Party say that if returned to power, then their policy would reduce the cost of living and the workers would be better off.

Article "Mystery of Rising Prices" says "a fall in prices might mean a really big rise in unemployment, which would lose them votes"; can this be explained more fully, please.

Yours faithfully,

THOS. W. CRESWICK.

Reply

As we have seen Labour Governments at work, it is not necessary to wonder what they would be likely to do about prices for in 1945 they promised to keep prices down, but during their six years of office retail prices rose by over 30 per cent.

It is erroneous to assume that the workers would gain from a fall and lose by a rise of prices: it depends on whether conditions are relatively favourable for resisting wage decreases or pressing for wage increases (i.e., whether there is little unemployment), and whether the workers take full advantage of those conditions. Sometimes wages have risen more than prices (as during the past few years); sometimes wages have risen less than prices (as between 1947 and 1951); sometimes when prices have fallen wages have fallen less than the fall of prices, and sometimes they have fallen more than the fall of prices.

Our correspondent is wrong in thinking that the article from which he quotes asserted that "a fall in prices might mean a really big rise in unemployment." The article said that that thought is in the minds of Labour and Tory governments: it is what they think, not what we think.

Their belief about low prices and high prices making for high and low unemployment probably owes its existence as much as anything to confused memories of prices and unemployment between the wars, when falling prices and heavy unemployment existed together. The idea grew in their minds that falling prices are the cause of unemployment and, therefore, high prices must be a way to keep unemployment at a low level. So during all the succeeding years when governments have argued the need to keep prices down, they have had the uneasy feeling that if they really did this (or worse still if they reduced prices) they might be increasing unemployment or even starting a trade depression.

Current opinion on the question of a steady price level can be seen from an article by Mr. Alan Day in the *Observer* (23/6/57) dealing with prices and unemployment in U.S.A. He wrote: "It seems justifiable to think that price stability in a free enterprise economy can be combined only with levels of unemployment which are politically unacceptable." In other words, you can have very low unemployment and rising prices or

a steady price level but with heavier unemployment, and that will lose the government votes. Lord Brand had the same idea in mind when he challenged Mr. Harold Wilson, M.P., to say whether he would still be in favour of measures to stop inflation "if it involved an appreciably higher level of unemployment here for the time being than that which has ruled since 1946—say three per cent, instead of, as now, between one per cent. and one and a-half per cent. . . ." (Letter to *Times*, 5/7/57.)

The above statements are concerned with the supposed effects of keeping prices level. Much more alarming views are held as to what would be the effect of actually reducing prices. As a *Daily Mail* editorial (12/7/57) said: "Better to have inflation and everyone at work than deflation and 3,000,000 unemployed."

Muddled Thinking

It is, however, an example of muddled thinking. It treats two quite different causes of general rise and fall of prices as if they were the same. The first is the result of manipulating the currency. When the pound sterling was freely convertible into gold and was by law fixed at a certain weight of gold, the Government, by altering the law, could have reduced the amount of gold in the pound (the sovereign) and thus could have increased prices; or could have increased the amount of gold in the coin and thus could have lowered prices. With a currency that is not convertible a government could increase or decrease the number of notes in circulation and similarly raise or lower the price level.

After the first world war many governments inflated their currency and thus raised prices (sometimes to an enormous extent), and later on withdrew or cancelled the note issue and replaced it by a smaller issue of a new currency, and thus lowered prices again. Russia carried out the latter operation in 1947 and Germany in 1948. The German Government withdrew and largely cancelled a Reichsmark issue estimated to have been as much as 100,000 million and replaced it with D marks to the amount of under 11,000 million; with consequent reduction of high black market prices to normal market prices at lower levels.

Continuously for nearly 20 years the British Government has followed the opposite policy, of excessively increasing the note issue. The other kind of general rise or fall in the price level that concerns us here is that which operates in booms and slumps. At the start of a boom keen competition among the capitalists to secure materials needed for expanding production sends up prices, while during a slump the holders of commodities are glad to turn them into money at heavily reduced prices. But booms and slumps do not occur because of currency changes, and there is no evidence that price movements through currency changes have any material influence on the course of booms and slumps, though they may have a temporary stimulating or depressing effect while adjustment takes place.

When capitalism is set on an expanding course currency changes may interrupt it, but will not hold it back; and when, through serious disproportion of production and dislocation of markets, capitalist production is contracting, currency changes will not reverse the tide.

After the first world war the British pound had fallen in relation to the dollar from 4.86 dollars to about 3½ dollars. By stages to April 1925, it was brought back to its original level in relation to gold and the dollar. Although it was the Labour Party's official view that "a precipitate return" to the gold standard "may aggravate the existing grave condition of unemployment and trade depression" (*Labour Year Book*, 1926, p. 160), this did not happen. The amount of unemployment which in the three years before 1925 had averaged 12.1 per cent., was actually a little lower (11 per cent.) in the three years after 1925. And when the world-wide slump came in 1930 all countries were involved, irrespective of the changes they had made in their note issues and the price levels they happened to have.

Experience since 1945 likewise fails to support the popular belief that inflation and rising prices are responsible for low unemployment. Britain, with a big rise of retail prices (about 50 per cent. since 1948), has had

continuously low unemployment, but Italy, with a price rise of about 30 per cent., has had continuous heavy unemployment, at a percentage at least five times as high as in Britain. In Germany, where prices have risen much less since 1948 (about 15 per cent.), unemployment, which was at first very heavy, has been declining, at first slowly, but later on quite rapidly.

The evidence points to the conclusion that there is no truth in the belief that rising prices (through continual gentle doses of inflation) have been responsible for the low unemployment in this country since the war, and that there is no truth in the hope of those who hold this belief that continuing the same policy will prevent further crises and depressions.

In conclusion, it need only be added that deflation and a falling price level would not benefit the workers unless and to the extent that conditions enabled them to resist wage reductions and that they made use of whatever opportunity offered. H.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, August 1907).

"The Menace of Socialism"

The *Daily Express* endeavours to make capital—or rather profit—out of the prominence which the word "Socialism" has attained during the past few years. The character of its attack upon what for its purpose it chooses to consider as Socialism, is quite worthy of the traditions of "yellow" or capitalist journalism.

In heavy type on its leader page the *Express* published the following:—

"Why not look the facts in the face? The issue is no longer Liberalism against Conservatism. It is, instead,

Constitutionalism—which signifies unity of Empire and the rights of property, law and order—against Socialism, which stands for disruption, for loot, for the elimination of individual enterprise, and the incentive to do great things; for laziness, for Atheism and Free Love."

Here wage-slavery, the exploitation of the mass of the people to supply the luxuries and ease of wealthy drones, appears disguised as Constitutionalism, Empire, Property, Law and Order! Whilst Socialism is disguised also, but in a different way, as Disruption, Loot, Laziness, Atheism and Free Love!

But who, pray is it intended should be frightened by these scarecrows? Is it the worker? Or is it the leech to be applied to some scared capitalists for the benefit of the free and glorious Press?

CORRESPONDENCE

Northfleet, Kent.

The Editorial Committee.

Dear Sirs,—I have been a reader of your journal for nearly two years now, and I am always delighted by the vigorous articles in it.

I am in basic disagreement with your analysis of the world's problems. I don't think that merely a change in system will solve them. You assume that everybody will be perfectly selfless and take no advantage of their freedom to take just what they like, with no regard to their real needs. You may dispense with money and all the trappings of the capitalist system, but you have not changed human beings at all. The world is in the state it is because people are naturally sinful and greedy. Everybody is sinful to some degree, both capitalists and workers. You must change people, not the system.

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD T. CROSS.

Windermere, Westmorland.

The Editor, THE SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sir,—If the debate "Socialism Versus

Religion" in your last issue was fairly reported, it was a farcical affair. I wonder if, in the first place, whether it was really necessary. Is Socialism then at odds with religion? To many of us it is the practical application of religious philosophy. Some churches might have been at odds, or still might be; but if the New Testament is read aright one can find very much to support Socialism, and nothing at all to oppose it on any count. Was Jesus born privileged? Did he live in opulence? Was he given a grand state funeral? He was born in a stable, lived in poverty, and suffered a state execution. He condemned the rich in no uncertain manner, and preached equality with and responsibility to one's neighbour.

In the past the church was condemned by Socialists because it condoned the evil order of things. But must religion be condemned for the sins of the church? Jesus did not belong to any church, and was in fact arrested and executed for his opposition to the state church.

In the second place, I cannot for the life of me see how on earth a Christian can produce "evidence" of the existence of God; or how anything like a group that calls itself the "Catholic Evidence Guild" can exist for that

purpose. How can a sighted man produce evidence of the existence of light to a man totally blind from birth? Especially if the blind man does not want to believe in its existence anyway? Evidence of the existence of God is everywhere, even in the innermost conscience of Comrade Jarvis; but no one can make anyone else accept that evidence if he does not want to do. A true Tory would not accept the fact of bad working and living conditions among workers in a particular industry as "evidence" of the evils of capitalism. Nor can a materialist accept life, beauty, nature, the testimony of millions who have felt "religious experience" as evidence of the existence of God. He has not the eyes to see.

One need not believe in the virgin birth, the miracles, or the divinity of Jesus to find God. Nor need one necessarily attend a church.

One thing is certain: if religion is a delusion, then it is a strange delusion, because millions have been persecuted and have been put to death because of it, and have faced death bravely and happily. If religion is delusion, then Socialism is delusion—life itself is delusion!

There are many thousands of Socialists who are Socialists because of, not in spite of, their religion. They may not broadcast the fact, because religion is a very

personal possession and it cannot be adequately expressed in words. Words are for material things.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN WYATT.

Dundee, Scotland.

To the Editor.

Religion and Socialism.

In a report of a debate on Socialism versus Religion that appeared in the June issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Mr. Jarvis, who represented the Socialist case against religion, said: "There can be no religion without God, although there can be religious ritual and paraphernalia without God." Now if there is any logic in the first part of this statement, I take it to be this: the existence of religion presupposes a belief in the existence of God, one could not exist without the other. If this is true, then Mr. Jarvis must be talking in riddles when he asks his opponent for proof of the existence of God, as he has already given proof by his own statement that religion could not exist without God. And from this logic I take it, seeing that the Christian religion and the religion of Islam exists, so then must God. But if God does not exist at all, which, of course, is the Socialist view, how does Mr. Jarvis reconcile this view with his own statement that religion would not exist without God? R. SMITH.

HOW WELL IS THE "WELFARE STATE"?

(Continued from July SOCIALIST STANDARD).

Working hours and traffic accidents

TRAFFIC accidents in Austria are relatively of the same terrible frequency as in other countries. 30-40 people are on an average killed every week and a thousand injured.

A shocking accident occurred on a winding mountain road near Bolzano (Northern Italy) when, late in the night, an Austrian bus with 42 people aboard fell over a ravine into a narrow river, killing 19 persons and severely injuring most of the others; another case was that of a motor truck running into the Danube near Vienna, which brought to light the conditions under which drivers have to work. Overtime is the regular thing, especially during the tourist season, and it is encouraged by extremely low wages and much unemployment in the winter months. The average wage for drivers is under S.300 for a 48-hour week (about £4 10s.), which many drivers make up to 100 hours or more. One driver worked 48 normal hours and 59 hours overtime. In the goods transport business drivers work on the average a 66-hour week. For the driver who drove his truck into the Danube it was proved that he had been 40 hours behind the wheel, on a tour from Innsbruck to Vienna and back. On a recent tour through Switzerland, Italy and France, this writer personally travelled such distances as Venice-Vienna (400 miles) in a 14-hour day. This after the driver had for nine days been on the road every day, without a single rest day.

It should here be pointed out that when Socialists speak of exploitation of the workers, this term rightly applies to the "normal," mostly legally fixed working

week, say, 40 to 48 hours, in which the employer's profit must be made—hence it is a process of exploitation. Working 60 or more hours per week must then be described as sweated labour, with, of course, correspondingly increased profit for the employer. But one cannot repeat often enough that working a normal, legally fixed working day of eight hours for wages is a process of EXPLOITATION, since the workers have to produce not only the value of their wages, but the employer's profit as well. This profit is pocketed by the employer WITHOUT payment to the worker.

As a matter of fact it is this UNPAID labour only that interests the employing class and their managers, and induces them to have the instruments of production under their control operated at all. If there is no profit or no prospect of profit, there is no production, however great or urgent the want and need may be and regardless of people starving and freezing. The employer, the man of business, is by no means a philanthropist. Even if he had sentimental feelings towards the worker and his family, the dictates of his system do not allow him to consider them. Without exploiting the workers the capitalist cannot employ them.

Even relatively good and favourable conditions of work in hygienic installations, with good air, in light and modern workshops and plants, with social service arrangements, family allowances, health insurance, unemployment insurance, old age pensions, etc.—all things that make people talk of a Welfare State—cannot alter the fact of EXPLOITATION and humiliating dependency and worrying insecurity of the worker. The word

(Continued on page 121)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

AUGUST



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

TINKERING WITH THE COST OF LIVING INDEX

SO you can't live on your pay, and want the Cost of Living Index altered? Forget it and start thinking about something that really matters. Over forty years ago the British Government, encouraged by trade unions and the Labour Party, started an index to measure average changes in retail prices and rents, and with many modifications it is published now month by month, and many other governments do the same. It has well served the Governments and employers, but for the workers it has been a red-herring on which they have wasted and still waste an enormous amount of misdirected thought and agitation.

Is the doctor's thermometer accurate?

The general idea behind the agitation for a "better index" is that it is like the thermometer the doctor uses to tell him something about what ails you and to guide him in curing you. But this assumes that the doctor wants to cure you, and for what ails the workers the government and the employers are not seeking a cure, but only a dope to keep the patient quiet. What ails the workers is their poverty, caused by exploitation, the fact that they are producing wealth for others to own and getting back only a part, in the form of wages. The team of employing and governmental economic doctors are not looking for ways to end exploitation, but to perpetuate it. The class that has an interest in ending its own exploitation and introducing Socialism, the working class, must tackle the job itself; tinkering with the cost of living index has no bearing whatever on that task. It hasn't even any helpful bearing on the problem of getting the best out of capitalism. Just as the patient knows very well that he feels ill without having a thermometer stuck under his tongue, so the poor know very well that they are poor without having to go to the index to find out. The employers and the government likewise do not have to consult that oracle before they could give

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higher wages or higher old age pensions, if they wanted to; but there's the rub, they don't want to. They will use the index when it suits them, to help prove that they should not give more than they are giving; and with equal facility they will, on occasion, find abundant reasons why they are "compelled" to give less.

Is the Index faked?

One supposition is that the index is faked. The idea that the poorly-paid civil servants who collect the figures and make the calculations fake them downwards is absurd. Their bias, if any, would, of course, be in the opposite direction, and all the more so between the wars when their own pay was related to the index. (And far from finding this satisfactory, they carried on year-long agitation to get away from it.)

There is another kind of faking, practised by the war-time Coalition Government and the succeeding Labour Government, but this was a sort of "open conspiracy" carried out in accordance with the policy of subsidies to keep prices down—a policy that had the enthusiastic approval of bone-headed Labourites and Communists. These governments subsidised or controlled the price of food and other items that went into the make-up of the index, but not the other essential items outside the



index: they kept down the index but not the cost of living.

It is true that an index covering a large number of items could show different results from an index covering a smaller number, but this works both ways. An index largely dominated by food prices would understate the general rise of prices if food prices were relatively low, but would equally overstate them when food prices were relatively high in comparison with other prices.

Frequently the demand for a different index is in the form of wanting a universally accurate index. There is not, and could not be, any such thing: a measure of average price rises could not apply equally accurately to different groups of workers on different wage levels, and to pensioners on lower incomes still.

And, of course, those who think they have an interest in the index are talking with their tongue in their cheek when they say they want "accuracy"; what they want is an index that comes out high, the more it overstates the real position the better. Their wish is

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more like that of the man who hots up the thermometer to prove he is ill when the doctor doesn't believe it.

Another kind of Index

The worker who blames the index for not being able to make ends meet on his wages does not understand what the index is and is for. It merely records the average movement of prices, up or down. It tells him, for example, that if he was slowly starving to death on £5 a week a year ago, it would require £5 5s. this year to maintain his same level of approaching starvation. It is his employer who pays him his starvation wage.

Some governments and private organisations maintain another kind of index in the form of a periodical assessment of how much is required to maintain a single worker or worker with a family. In this country the late Seebohm Rowntree produced a "minimum standard" of this kind. And that is what it always is, a "minimum standard," not how much but how little can a man live on. Coming back to our analogy of the doctor and the thermometer, it is designed to guide the

Continued from page 119)

worker remains even in the most beautiful factories and garden cities synonymous with poverty, and all fine words about security, the nobility and dignity of work cannot remove the stigma of social inferiority and dependency. The reality makes a mockery of all fine phrases.

To remedy this state of affairs the "Socialists" of the type of the "Socialist Party of Austria," of Scandinavia, of the English Labour Party, the Communist Parties, far from attributing social evils to capitalism, with its profit motive, and far from advocating its abolition, openly stand for the continuance of exploitation through the wages system.

On the question of the hours of labour in the transport industry, the party are now clamouring for more legislation, regulations and restraints, which, even if enacted, will leave things very much where they were before. Similarly, writing of the effects of automation, the *Arbeiter Zeitung* vaguely proposes a general internationally agreed reduction of working hours to prevent the blessings of automation turning into its opposite. As if any reforms that have in the past been advocated by the "Socialist" Party of Austria and their brother parties elsewhere had ever altered the status of the workers as a propertyless and exploited class. It never occurs to these scribes that what matters to the workers of the world is not what kind of machines are used to turn out goods, but who owns the machines. If they continue to be private or State property, as now, goods can only be produced as commodities; i.e., for sale and profit, and labour-power will also continue to remain a commodity, exposed to all the vicissitudes of the labour market.

Decades of labour movements, alleged "Socialist" and "Communist" governments in a number of countries large and small (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Russia, China and their satellite countries behind the iron curtain) have left Socialism as far away as ever. Nay, there is not even the suggestion there of aiming at

government and the employer in their continuous endeavour to keep the worker's standard as low as possible, to the point at which his physical capacity to keep up the good work of producing profits will not be endangered by under-nourishment. The people who produce such assessments of how little wealth the wealth producers can live on are adding insult to injury.

What to do

The workers should give up the fruitless search to cure their poverty disease by demanding a different thermometer; recognise that their present interest is to take every opportunity that conditions allow to get higher pay, no matter what the index says. But above and beyond this should be the incomparably more important task of ending capitalism and its wages system for ever. Only by doing this and establishing Socialism will the latent and restricted production powers of society be unleashed so that a vastly increased productive of useful articles and the cessation of armaments and other forms of waste will enable all to enjoy the dazzling possibilities of a new social system.

the abolition of the profit motive in production. Indeed, the abolition of the wages system and the establishment of a classless, moneyless, frontierless system of society wherein the means of life would be produced for the sole purpose of use, is looked upon as a utopia in those "Socialist" circles as much as in the avowed capitalist quarters. In fostering confusion on the issue, the "Socialist" Party of Austria is hard to beat. Here is an example:—

Among the 101 items on their recent election programme was what the *Arbeiter Zeitung* called "A remarkable aim, opening up far-reaching prospects for the future." Was it the abolition of exploitation of man by man, with its resultant evils of poverty, insecurity, class conflict and war? Was this "remarkable aim" the establishment of a classless, moneyless, propertyless and povertyless system of society based on common ownership of the means and instruments of wealth production and distribution?

Not on your life! In their own words, the "remarkable aim" is: "To bring Austria in line with the highly developed industrial countries of Western and Northern Europe, to bring 'our' country to the level of Denmark or Holland, not to speak of Sweden and Switzerland." What the conditions in these highly developed industrial countries are was described in an article in the SOCIALIST STANDARD for July. Denmark, like Sweden and Norway, have social democratic governments, and it speaks volumes for the "Socialist" education these "Socialist" parties provide, that the opium of nationalism and religion, the hoary traditions and superstitions supporting and perpetuating the privileges of a small class of about 10 per cent., including the royal families, can continue to be inculcated into the brain of the young generation, whilst the remaining 90 per cent. of the people consider as unalterable their miserable status of a propertyless class of wage-slaves dependent for their means of livelihood on securing a job with some employer. Was it not Denmark where only recently a 100,000 workers had to go on strike for weeks in order not to allow their wretched standard of living sinking

still deeper? Was it not Denmark where police armed with batons and police dogs were sent against the strikers—an episode that prompted a Vienna newspaper to the remark that the "Socialism" of the Danish social democratic party had now literally gone before the dogs! Today it is line-up with the Scandinavian kingdoms, yesterday a former "great Austrian Socialist" recommended Anschluss and voted for Hitler Germany,

ODDS AND ENDS

Stalinists and Trotskyists Unite?

When one of Stalin's agents split open the head of Trotsky with an axe in Singhaese, a suburb of Mexico City, on August 20th, 1940, who would have thought that, in 1957, four avowed and unrepentant followers of the late Leon Trotsky would have been invited to visit the Soviet Union, and would be fêted by Stalin's former collaborators? But it has happened.

On the 21st April of this year four Trotskyist M.P.s from Ceylon were among a party of Ceylonese Members of Parliament who landed by airplane (a Soviet airplane) at Tashkent airport in the Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan.

On April 22nd, which was the anniversary of Lenin's birthday, one of the Trotskyist M.P.s, Colvin de Silva, gave a lecture on the Life of Lenin, "which was greatly appreciated by the Russian and Usbek comrades." (*Samasamajist*, 16th May, 1957.)

No doubt our Ceylon Trotskyists enjoyed their stay with their Soviet "comrades." But we wonder if they gave any thought to the hundreds of Trotskyists and other oppositionist Communists murdered by the Soviet rulers in the Soviet Union and elsewhere; and whether they mentioned this to their Soviet "comrades." All this makes us wonder if there are any real differences between the Stalinist "Communists" and the Trotskyist "Communists" after all.

Reform or Revolution

Like the "orthodox" Communists, the Trotskyists claim to be "revolutionaries" and Marxists. Unlike Labour politicians who advocate political and social reforms, the Trotskyists claim to be opposed to reformism; but *all* of the resolutions passed by the Samasamaja May Day Rally in Ceylon belie this claim. Among other things, the Trotskyists demanded "a national minimum wage" and "full employment—work or maintenance." And on pages 2 and 3 of *Samasamajist* (1st May, 1957) we find the following slogans: "Keep Ceylon Out of War!" "Take Back Our War Bases."

And these they call revolutionary slogans! They're about as revolutionary as those of the British Labour Party!

A Revolutionary Policy?

What, then, is a revolutionary policy? It is one that recognises that since the capitalist system gives rise to, and perpetuates the problems of war, poverty, and insecurity; and that these and many other problems are inherent in the system itself, the *only* solution to these problems is the abolition of the system itself and replacement by another—a Socialist one.

described the British and the Bolshevik empires—the decisive part of the world—as being under the leadership of the working-class, to-morrow it will be something else, but never Socialism. (The millions of workers in Eastern slave-labour camps and the poverty stricken wageslaves still outside would no doubt be amazed if told that they are the masters of one-sixth of the earth.)
(To be continued). R.

Programmes of social reform cannot solve these problems; they only help to perpetuate the system that causes them. Therefore one would expect a "revolutionary" not to advocate, say, a national minimum wage, but the abolition of the wages system altogether. But, then, one cannot expect such a policy from a Communist, Stalinist, Trotskyist, or any other of the fifty-seven varieties.

Socialism—What is it?

Like Labour politicians, the Communists of both the "Stalinist" and Trotskyist varieties claim to stand for Socialism—sometime in the future. But what do they mean by Socialism? Do they mean by Socialism—or for that matter, Communism—what Marx and Engels meant by Socialism or Communism? Socialism to Marx and Engels and Socialism to the Socialist Party means a world-wide universal system of society based on the common ownership of the means of wealth production. It will be a classless society, democratic throughout—a free society, where the coercive forces of the state will have disappeared, and where production will be solely in order to satisfy the needs of the people. When a Socialist society "gets on its feet" the watchword will be: "From each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her needs."

Such a society is beyond the ken of the Khrushchevs, Politts, Titos, and the Trotskyist M.P.s who visited their "Stalinist" comrades in the Soviet Union earlier this year. Their concept of Socialism is our old "enemy"—Nationalisation!

Dictatorship in the Soviet Union

Since arriving back in Ceylon one of the Trotskyist M.P.s, Colvin de Silva, has written a number of articles giving his impression of Soviet society today. He points out that the single party dictatorship is openly upheld by the Soviet rulers as a correct system. And although he does not quote from it, he says that: "The Soviet constitution itself gives to the Communist Party this dictatorial position, and so long as the Stalinists are in power they will not allow any other party to function in the Soviet Union." (*Samasamajist*, 23rd May, 1957.)

(The Articles in the Soviet Constitution (1936) making the Communist Party the only legal party are numbers 126 and 141—see *Soviet Communism: A New Civilisation*, by S. and B. Webb, pp. 428 and 430).

"Democracy" in the Soviet Union

However, within the framework of the one-party system the Soviet rulers attempt to give the impression

that there is democracy in Soviet Russia.

Colvin de Silva writes that they have relaxed the terror that existed throughout the years of Stalin's rule. The reason for this, in de Silva's view, is "that the economically privileged strata of the population are pressing upon the Government to make concessions to them," and "that the masses are pressing upon the ruling bureaucracy for concessions" also.

The Soviet authorities laid great stress on the claim that the members of the Soviets are elected. But "This is, of course, absurd, when no opposition parties are allowed and when all that a Soviet citizen can do is to vote for or against the candidate put up by the government party."

The Soviet Government also stress that not only is criticism of the government permitted, but is even encouraged. But, of course, only criticism and self-criticism is allowed—never opposition!

Inequality—greater than in Britain

Social equality has always been stigmatised by Stalin as a "petty bourgeois prejudice," but very few people realise just how great social inequalities are in the Soviet Union. The following short quotation from Colvin de Silva's article will give them some idea of the inequalities of income in Soviet society today:—

"Another aspect of the Trotskyist analysis which I found confirmed is the prevalence of gross inequality in wages and incomes among the Soviet workers and collective farmers. In the first place, probably fully one-fifth of the Soviet workers receive only 350 rubles per month as wages. As against this, there are higher paid workers who earn as

much as three thousand to three thousand and five hundred rubles a month, that is ten times as much as the lower paid workers. Secondly, a factory manager receives as much as twelve to fifteen thousand rubles a month and even more. He therefore receives forty times the amount of the lowest paid worker. There are scientists, writers, administrators, who have even larger incomes than the manager, so that the inequality is even greater than one to forty. [The monthly stipend of the Patriarch of the Russian orthodox church is 50,000 rubles a month! P.E.N.] This kind of inequality, which creates a gulf between rich and poor, has nothing to do with Socialism. Indeed, you do not get such wage and salary inequality even in capitalist England today." (*Samasamajist*, 23/5/57.)

Of course, the Trotskyist writer is quite correct when he says that this has nothing to do with Socialism. But, unfortunately, he does not know what Socialism is himself. In another article ("The Collective Farm System And The Class Struggle," *Samasamajist*, 30th May, 1957) he writes:—

"The basic form of a Socialist agriculture is therefore the State-farm, that is, the farm owned and run by the State; just as the basic Socialist form in industry is the factory-owned and run by the State."

Does not Colvin de Silva, M.P., know that Socialism will have no need of the state apparatus? That the state will have "died out"; and that the state ownership of the land, farms and the factories is in fact *State Capitalism*, which is the form of society existing in the Soviet Union today—not Socialism, or a "degenerated workers' state," whatever that may be? Colvin and the other Trotskyist M.P.s have learnt quite a lot about Soviet Russia—now they have got quite a lot to learn about Socialism!

PETER E. NEWELL.

DEBATE

SOCIALISM OR ANARCHISM?

Report of a Public Debate held at Bethnal Green Library on Friday, 16th May.

DONALD ROOUM for the London Anarchist Group,

R. COSTER for the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

Chairman: GEORGE PLUME (P.P.U.)

The Socialist speaker opened by referring to the title of the debate. It would perhaps sound cryptic to non-Socialists and non-Anarchists; the subject of the debate, fully stated, was whether it was the Socialist case or Anarchist arguments that held the solution to the problems of mankind.

The Socialist case was against Capitalism and for Socialism. Capitalism was the latest stage in man's social development; from his beginnings man had organized socially for survival and for the satisfaction of his needs. We had no knowledge of man as an individual, only as a social being in a social context.

All societies—primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism—were founded upon the manner in which man set about organizing to produce for the satisfaction of his needs: what Marx had termed the mode of production. On the different bases of different modes of production, he had found necessary different institutions, different mores, different religions, different laws, different attitudes and concepts, and different kinds of government. Always, however, the distinguishing feature between societies was none of these by itself, but the mode of production which gave rise to them all.

Capitalist society was based on the ownership of all of the means of life by a small class. The remainder, the

majority, had to be wage-workers, all more or less poorly paid. This basic class-structure had never changed within Capitalism; the techniques of production might have altered, but not the basis.

The consequences of Capitalism in the form of social troubles were innumerable. War and its horrifying weapons, economic crises, poverty and its results, disease, bad housing, crime: all these and countless other problems were direct results of the system which was concerned only with sale and profit. The only standard by which a society could be judged was whether it satisfied the needs of the people living within it, and by this measure Capitalism—for all its spectacular achievements—failed completely.

The speaker referred also to attempts to reform Capitalism. If it were true that social problems were the outcome of the system itself, and not of mismanagement of it, then it followed that all policies of reform were useless, since they aimed to abolish effects while retaining the cause.

The capitalist class, however, did not rule by their own strength. Many of them had never seen, had little knowledge of, the factories, land, workshops and enterprises which they owned. Their ownership was main-

tained and protected by the State, which had no other function. It was in this coercive agency, with its fighting forces and penal systems, that capitalist power resided.

It followed, therefore, that any body of people wishing to change the ownership basis of society must go to the place where ownership was kept: that is, it could only seek to take hold of the powers of government as the means of taking away capitalist ownership. This was the aim of the Socialist Party. Its policy was to make Socialists, for a conscious and politically organized working class to go to the State and make the ownership of the means of life common to everybody.

In the Socialist society, thus based on common ownership, the competition which led to wars, crises and chaos, would have ended. So would poverty; there would be no wages, no money barrier to the satisfaction of needs. The aim of society would be simply for all people to share, according to their needs, in all that the earth produced.

It might be thought that this was the common objective of Socialists and Anarchists, and that they differed only as to the means of achieving it. This was not so. The Anarchists had only the nebulous aim of overthrowing "authority," and all their proposals were founded on complete misunderstanding of the nature of society. Indeed, by ignoring the role of the State and urging people to "direct action" against it, they sought to harm the interests of working people. The Socialist Party aimed at making Socialists; the Anarchist movement could make only martyrs.

DONALD ROOUM, opening for the Anarchists, said that in stating their case he would repeat much of what the Socialist speaker had said. The Socialist was completely mistaken about the idea of Anarchy, however. He would say that though Socialists and Anarchists had the same professed aim, Socialists did not mean what they said, whereas the Anarchists wanted people to act on their ideas. All factions but the Anarchists wanted people on their knees before some authority, and in the end would only swindle their followers.

"Anarchy" came from the Greek and meant "without government." Until the eighteen-eighties Anarchists had called themselves Anarchist-Socialists. They abandoned this because of confusion of thought among Socialists, as they had later to abandon the name Anarchist-Communists. The basis of Anarchist ideas was that society existed for the benefit of individuals, and the aim of Anarchist society would be to increase individual opportunities. There were two kinds of social relationships—free and coercive; Anarchy meant a society founded on free co-operation.

Our society was dominated by coercion. We hated work because we were forced by employers, police and money; we were all in danger of being bombed because mentally unhealthy politicians insisted on continuing with bomb tests. We suffered from having such people in power, with the right to do such things; they were insane and irresponsible—only delinquent lunatics could be politicians. Even if perfect beings formed a government, they would soon be imperfect.

Governments kept going by violence and the threat of it from bombs, police and possible poverty and unemployment. Thus, the world was made unpleasant for individuals. The alternative was for society to be based

not on government, but on co-operative relationships: "common ownership" if you liked to call it that. In such a society workers would control the factories, land and so on themselves.

Anarchy could be brought about by making people Anarchists. Anarchists did not seek, as the Russian Communists had done, to take power dishonestly. They said that the way to get rid of coercion was to stop letting oneself be coerced. The Russian Communists had said the State would wither away, but they retained the police and the armies, like all other governments; the fact was that power corrupted all those who took it. Thirty centuries of grinding-down by governments proved this.

The solution, then, was for everybody to co-operate with his equals, and refuse to allow anybody to take power over him.

R. COSTER, making the second speech for the Socialist Party, said the Anarchist speaker had not met the point that governmental power and coercion were founded on the private ownership of the means of production.

The Socialist case was that the problems of the present-day world originated in the capitalist economic system, and that a co-operative world could only be established on a different ownership basis. While private ownership existed, politicians—delinquent or otherwise—could only when they were in power carry out the requirements of capitalism. He instanced the recent history of the Labour Party, which had once had a strong pacifist strain, but when in office had instituted military conscription and begun the biggest armaments drive in history. Its members were not drunk with power, but were simply having to prepare for war because they had undertaken running the system which led to war.

The proposition that wars were caused by delinquent politicians was, in fact, capitalist nonsense; people had gone to war precisely because they had been told that the wars were begun by irresponsible and wicked rulers who must be opposed. It was equally silly to say that people were coerced to work by police and armies; they went to work because, having no ownership of the means of life, they could only live by selling their labour-power.

To change society there must be a body of people who knew what was needed and how it was to be done. It ill became the Anarchists to speak of "different kinds of Socialists," for they had little or no agreement. Mr. ROOUM had said he wanted the abolition of the wages system; many Anarchists were unsure about this, however, and some appeared to love the wages system. The means proposed were varied, too, though they were equally futile. Some thought Anarchy would be established by the practice of mutual aid within Capitalism; but it had already been shown that man was prevented from acting co-operatively by Capitalism. Others wanted to force Anarchist reforms until Capitalism turned into Anarchy; but reformism was the antithesis of revolution. And others still proposed a "social general strike"—that is, they wanted workers to do the most foolish thing of all, to throw themselves under the Juggernaut of the State.

DONALD ROOUM began his second speech by complaining of the nature of the debate; he had not wanted to continue making speeches, but to have the audience participate in questions and discussion.

He denied what the Socialist speaker had said of Anarchists and the wages system. The statement that some Anarchists were unsure about and even thought they would keep the wages system, showed Coster to be, if he was not a liar, daft in the head. As for Capitalism preventing cooperative relationships, people were coerced simply because they allowed other people to coerce them; if they refused to allow the capitalist into the factory, he could not be there. Working-class power existed only in the factories—the vote was useless as a means to change.

Clause Six of the Socialist Party's Principles said that the working class must organize to conquer the powers of government to convert them "from an instrument of oppression into an agent of emancipation"; clear proof that the Socialist Party wanted not to change society, but to become the government. The Bolsheviks had done this—they were Socialists, they had been benevolent, but their good intentions faded when they had taken power.

Everyone was taught to revere authority from childhood; the authority might come from Capitalism, but whether or not it did so it was still authority. The Socialists asked people to surrender themselves to a body of people, and were either deceiving the people or deceiving themselves. The methods mentioned for establishing Anarchy were the only ones possible; the alternative to them was putting somebody else in power.

Before making his summing-up speech, DONALD ROOUM again said he did not like the form of the debate. He thought that Socialists regarded Anarchists as namby-pamby middle-class people, and had understood from the platform this evening that the Socialist Party was going to usher in Socialism in a very short time.

BOOK REVIEW

THE HOLY FAMILY

This work (Lawrence & Wishart, 7/6), of which Marx wrote much the greater part, polemicalises against the prominent left Hegelians, the brothers Bauer—Bruno, Edgar and Egbert—plus two shadowy acolytes, Zychlinsky, who wrote under the pen name of Szeliga, and Richardt, the publisher of the *General Gazette for Literature*, the organ in which the Bauers wrote their views and in one issue of which appeared an attack on Marx. It was these, along with Casper Schmidt, alias Max Stirner, whom Marx satirically named "the Holy Family." The name was not unjustified, for under the high sounding revolutionary phraseology of the Bauers lay the kernel of religious mysticism.

The One-sidedness of Hegel

After Hegel died dialectical nemesis swiftly followed. His philosophy of unity split into two schools of "right" and "left" Hegelians, and, like Humpty Dumpty, was never put together again. The Bauers posed as the arch-revolutionaries of the Hegelian "Left." What they did in effect was to develop even more one-sidedly the one-sidedness of Hegel. Hegel had propounded the notion that change was the form in which an unchanging absolute or God was made manifest. In the process, said Hegel, of our acquiring ever greater aspects of truth

At this point the Anarchist speaker said he had nothing further to say and would let his opponent have any remaining time.

Summing-up for the Socialist Party, R. COSTER replied to various points which had been made for Anarchism. He read quotations from Anarchist papers and from Berkman's *ABC of Anarchism* to show the varied views of Anarchists on the wages system, from those who advocated a complicated system of credit and currency under Anarchy to those who proposed simply equalization of incomes and a standard working week.

The allegation that the Socialist Party wanted to govern could not be supported by a single word from fifty-three years of party literature. Comparison with Russia was meaningless, but the Anarchists, lacking in scientific analysis, had groped in the dark over the Russian Revolution: a quotation described how prominent Anarchists had supported the Bolshevik Revolution and become "disillusioned." To be disillusioned one had to have illusions first.

The Anarchist speaker had said it did not matter where authority came from. This was the most extraordinary statement of all. The Anarchists were concerned solely with authority—its abolition was the only aim upon which they agreed—yet they were unconcerned and did not wish to know whence it came. To the Socialist, causes had always to be sought. The whole of history showed that, so far from the nature of government being unimportant, every class which had aspired to change society in its own interests had had to gain control of the powers of government. This was the real lesson from countless centuries of political history; this was the aim of Socialists, who sought to replace Capitalism with Socialism and to do so by going to the seat of capitalist power.

C. R.

leading to ultimate truth, an active principle of consciousness was involved in this knowing process. The Bauers threw out God and the whole choir and furniture of heaven. They did, however, seize upon this creative and active element of the mind and constructed it into a first principle.

History for the Bauers became the history of ideas, themselves aspects of a self-acting, self-revealing Truth. From this Truth there burgeoned forth absolute ethical categories—Justice, Virtue, Freedom, etc. The Bauers set up these metaphysical entities in place of Hegel's God and called upon people to worship them.

The Material World an Illusion

Most people, said Bruno Bauer, and especially the working class, thought that their material needs and interests were the real stuff of life. But this was an illusion due to the uncritical nature of their thinking, and hence defective social vision. The essence of Reality, he said, was the self-acting, self-creating mind, with its projection of absolute ethical values. Matter was merely an alienated and perverted form of consciousness. On other occasions he referred to matter as the unconscious part of consciousness. According to Bruno Bauer, the material world was an illusion, only abstractions like

Truth, Justice, Harmony, Freedom, and so on were real. On such an assumption abstractions were more real than human beings. The real mystery of life, said Bauer, was that people had mistaken the illusion for reality, and vice versa. Only the chosen few who had the faculty of critical thinking, "the critical critics," like the Bauers, could unveil the mystery.

Mystical Apples

Marx, in dealing with what he called the secret of Hegelian speculation, in chapter five of *The Holy Family*, comments on this view bitingly and incisively. If, he says, abstractions are the ultimate reality, then apples, pears and almonds are but forms of the reality we call fruit. Thus apples, pears, almonds are not, as is commonly believed, real things, they are merely the modes of expression of the essence—fruit. It is this essence which is the reality, and apples, pears and almonds are their mystical representation. So apples, pears and almonds become dissolved into the concept—fruit, which becomes the real substance of apples, pears and almonds, and these in turn become the incarnations of mystery. In this way social relations of production, institutions, constitutions, civilization, etc., are resolved into the category of mystery. And so, says Marx, "mystery is thus raised to the Hegelian level of an independent subject which incarnates itself into situations and persons."

Changing Men's Hearts

Of what did the great revolution of the Bauers consist? The answer is, precious little. Stripped of its Hegelian fripperies, it announced that the millennium could only be brought in if the hearts of men were purified. Social evils could not be abolished by tampering with political and social mechanisms. To appeal to men's material interests was to repeat the mistakes of the past. In short, the revolution was to be a spiritual one. Governments, laws; in fact any form of organized tyranny, Bruno Bauer declared, would not be swept away by any action, political or otherwise, it could only be transcended by higher; i.e., critical thinking. In order to struggle to be free one had to be free from struggle in any practical or empirical sense.

Bauer sought to trump his opponents' aces by asserting that men were merely transient and historical products. History generated its own logic outside of men's wishes. The real virtue of the critical spirit was its recognition of this. Its task was to teach men not to resist evil, but endure it, and by enduring overcome it. Such a theory of social quietism, said Marx, by saying no action should be taken against existing society, so far from opposing it, works on its behalf.

No Place for the Working Class

True, the Bauers in proclaiming their heaven on earth, kicked up a hell of a row about it, and spoke of their bloodless categories in blood-curdling language, but even the censor eventually realised that the world of the Bauers was not strictly within their province, but belonged to the realm of pure thought.

The Bauers, consistent with their metaphysics, identified mind with good and matter with evil. Translating this into social affairs, they looked upon the working class, or, as they termed them, "the mass," as being synonymous with matter and hence the source of social evil. They were then, according to the Bauers, the real enemy of progress. Believing that the motor

of history was great ideas; i.e., the products of critical thinking, they also believed great men were the incarnation or personification of them. Great ideas had failed in the past because great men had sought the support of the uncritical mass. As a result these great ideas had often come to a miserable, even tragic end.

Salvation through "Great Men"

Yet if evil was to be overcome, the mass must be saved in spite of themselves. And, believing as the Bauers did, that the "law of progress" worked through personal agencies, then the instruments for the salvation of the mass could only be great men. In England Carlyle was enunciating a somewhat similar doctrine. The heroes of the Bauers, unlike those of Carlyle, were not to be benevolent despots or enlightened dictators, but high-minded philanthropists who, by their ennobling work, would set an example to the mass and lead them into an appreciation and even grateful acceptance of absolute ethical values. Such an order of sentimental philanthropy found its literary expression in the novels of Charles Dickens and Eugene Sue.

The Father of Sherlock Holmes

The reader of the *Holy Family*, unaware of its theoretical and controversial background, might be astonished to find almost half of the book devoted to Eugene Sue's novel, *The Mysteries of Paris*. Nobody, not even Dickens, made so sensational an attack on social abuses, via fiction, as did Eugene Sue. The novel is about a German prince who, with the aid of a reformed pugilistic blackguard, fights and eventually triumphs over the underworld of crime, backed by wealthy men as well as correcting the abuses of wealth and power en route. With its compound of sentimental ideals and unrestrained violence, via a series of bloody and maudlin intrigue, it served as the prototype of Sherlock Holmes, Sexton Blake, Bulldog Drummond, and the Saint.

Eugene Sue applied one of the accepted canons of bourgeois morality by expounding how good overcomes evil by playing its own dirty game even dirtier and showing that good can be more violent and evil than evil itself. Moreover, in such a morality so satisfying is the reward of virtue in making vice expiate its crimes by killings, solitary confinement, beatings up, and the long purgatory of penitence, that it is almost raised to a hedonistic principle. The novel also seeks to show how the thrills of adventure can find their outlet in slumming, especially in disguise. Then there is charity, which offers the rich organised and humane entertainment, where at balls they dance for the poor and at banquets eat for the poor—apart from abolishing poverty. Eugene Sue, like other contemporary social novelists, took poverty and exploitation to be the social norm. The lower orders being a dependent, servile and, à la Bruno Bauer, an uncritical mass were, as such, incapable of ethical judgments; what they could do was to acquire the virtues of thrift, frugality and modesty out of gratitude to the munificence of the lords and ladies bountiful.

The Hero's Motives

Ironically enough, the "critical critics," the Bauers, saw in Sue's sensational thriller the literary representative of critical consciousness personified in the hero—the prince—and Szeliga wrote a long philosophical dissertation on it. If the essence of the Bauers' philosophy of

humanitarianism was really a philosophy of dehumanisation by seeing people as the mere incarnation of abstract ethical categories, then Sue's novel was in some respects a concrete exemplification of it. But Sue, of course, showed very clearly that his hero was actuated by earthly motives like hate and revenge and not pure disinterestedness. Marx takes the opportunity of attacking in an exuberant and forceful fashion both the interpretation of Szelega and the social doctrine implied in the novel, and seems to have found it highly congenial. Marx in dealing with the discrepancies between the prince's flaming ideals and his actual conduct, reveals his remarkable insight into the disguised motivation of social behaviour which he was later to systemise into his account of what constituted ideologies.

Marx also defends Proudhon against the gross misinterpretation of his doctrine by the Bauers, and shows that Proudhon was the first to effectively challenge the eternal verities of Political Economy—Private Property. Marx also adumbrates economic views which were later to take shape in his theory of value.

Ideas and History

One of the most interesting aspects of the book is when Marx takes issue with Bauer on the role of ideas in history. Bruno Bauer, as has been seen, gave to historical ideas an absolute significance, and made them the substance of reality. History for him was the history of ideas. Of course, ideas are always part of history, but they are always related to specific situations. They are not stored up ghostly categories awaiting the appointed hour to be fused with history by some mysterious dialectical process, in order to make their bow on the human stage. The relevant question is how do ideas make history? Why are some ideas effective and others not? Why do some live and others die? Why are some ideas efficient instruments for social change and others fade into lost ideals and forgotten causes?

Capitalist Interests and the French Revolution

Marx's answer was that only those social ideas which are embodied in class interests can be historically effective, and the needs and interests of a class must be rooted in the concrete conditions and powers if they are to be actualised. Marx proceeds to show why, in the French Revolution, Robespierre and his party went down to destruction because they confused the needs and interests of the French bourgeoisie with the ideals of the ancient Athenian democracy. He also answers Bauer that some of the ideas put forth extended beyond the range of bourgeois interests and failed precisely for that reason and not because the uncritical mass could not embrace them. The French Revolution, in spite of its ideals, could not embrace the whole community because the interests of one part of it excluded the interests of the other. Marx also shows the part played by powerful sections of the bourgeoisie in encompassing the downfall of Napoleon.

Ideas and Social Change

It is true that social classes have many interests: religious, vocational, legal, economic, etc. But if we ask what interests are crucial to effective social change, then the answer is those which develop out of the structure of the mode of production. That is why Marx made the starting point of his historical investigation the

Continued overleaf

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ... 11.15 a.m.—2 p.m.
3.30—6 p.m.

Beresford Square, Woolwich ... 8 p.m.

East Street
(Walworth) Aug. 4th 12 noon
" 11th 12 noon
" 18th 1 p.m.
" 25th 11 a.m.—1 p.m.

Whitestone Pond
(Hampstead) ... 11.30 a.m.

Finsbury Park ... 11.30 a.m.

WEDNESDAYS

Gloucester Road ... 8 p.m.

THURSDAYS

Notting Hill Gate ... 8.30 p.m.

FRIDAYS

Earls Court (opp. Station) ... 8 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Lincoln's Inn Fields ... Tuesdays & Fridays
Finsbury Pavement ... Tuesdays
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.



DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

Bristol—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

Dundee Group—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Benzie Road, Dundee.

Edinburgh. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh.

Manchester Sec.: J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. 'Phone: D14bury 5709.

Oldham—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

Redhill and Reigate District—C. E. Smith, 88, Chart Lane, Reigate Surrey.

Swansea—Enquiries to V. Brain, 17, Bryn a Wella Rd., Pencoolgi, Nr. Llanelly.

PUBLICATION DATE OF
"SOCIALIST STANDARD"

In order that copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD can be on sale in the Provinces on the first day of the month, it has been decided to have it printed several days earlier. This requires that articles shall be delivered to the Editorial Committee at Head Office not later than the 14th of the month. Notices of meetings must also be sent in earlier than in the past, though it will sometimes be possible to secure their insertion later than the 14th.

LETTERS FROM READERS INVITED

Our Annual Conference in April decided that a section of the SOCIALIST STANDARD be reserved for letters from readers as a regular feature. Readers are invited to send letters of comment and criticism and questions for answer. Letters should be kept as short as possible as space is limited, and the shorter the letters the larger the number that can be printed. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

TO MEMBERS

We are holding a

SOCIAL EVENING

on TUESDAY, 6th AUGUST at 8.30 p.m.

to welcome Comrade Frank of Austria
who is over here on a visit

HACKNEY BRANCH — ECONOMICS CLASS

Wednesdays, August 14th and 28th and fortnightly thereafter at 8 p.m.

Co-op. Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8.

Tutors: W. Read and E. Wilmott.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (Sept. 5th and 19th) at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m. No Meetings in August.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: S. Roope, 42, Ava'on Road, Orpington, Kent.

EALING Fridays 2nd and 9th August only, at 8 p.m. sharp. Weekly again from Sept. 6th at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCELES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHelsea. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o. H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. E. A. Darrook, 51, Plant St., Glasgow, E.1. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (Aug. 14th and 28th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, Aug. 5th and 19th at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney. Sec.: O. James, 56, Weymouth Terrace, E.2.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak Edgware. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m., Aug. 14th and 28th, 108c, Goldhurst Terrace, (near) Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 111, Upper Tollymore Park, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MO1 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 62a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Griley, 17, Cotswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae," Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Skirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, Friham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsey, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

Continued from previous page

varying character of men's needs. From these needs arise the division of labour and with it the rise of specialised groups evolving into social classes. And with these classes goes the systemization of ideas and attitudes which become class ideologies. Marx thus corrected Bruno Bauer's confusion on interests, ideas and history.

The *Holy Family* is not the playful exuberance of the youthful Marx, but a work in which we find his basic doctrines taking shape. His language was still the language of *Feurbach*, and he uses the word human where later he was to use the term class. The *Holy Family* is a milestone in Marx's approach to Marxism. For even Marx was not born a Marxist. E. W.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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No. 637 Vol. 53 September, 1957

You and The Rent Act

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RE-EXAMINED

FIFTY YEARS AGO

IS POLITICS A RACKET?

LABOUR'S TOMBSTONE

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OCTOBER 6th IS A SIGNIFICANT DATE in landlord's diaries, for on that day the first instalment of rent increases under the new Rent Act become payable. Even if the reader of this article has not the dubious advantage of living in a rent-controlled property, it is highly probable that he or she has already faced a substantial rise in the cost-of-living due to rate-increases or to the withdrawal of housing subsidies.

Rents

So much misleading and contradictory information and speculation has been provided about the provisions of the 1957 Rent Act that it may be advisable to outline its main effects. Firstly, dwelling-houses with a rateable value of over £40 in London or over £30 in the provinces are to be decontrolled which means that some 800,000 tenants and their families are to lose all security of tenure under the Rent Restriction Acts, although they have the doubtful benefit of a fifteen-months' waiting period. The next main provision provides for a substantial increase in the rents of practically all rent-controlled property, permitting an increase to bring the annual rent up to twice the gross value of the dwelling-house; or, if the landlord elects to be responsible for interior repairs, up to seven-thirds of the gross value. Even slum property, in poor condition will be liable for such increases, unless the property happens to be scheduled for slum clearance, or unless the tenant can obtain a "Certificate of Disrepair" from the local authority.

With regard to the question of houses in a bad state of repair, the landlord is still in a strong position, for the tenant, in order to obtain a certificate, must prove to the satisfaction of the local authority that the property is in disrepair, "having regard to the age, character and locality of the dwelling." In simple language all this means that a small house, built, say, in 1850, would suffer an increase from perhaps 22/6 per week to about £2 5s. per week, or even more if the landlord carried out internal repairs. The overall picture seems to be that the rents of rent-controlled property will rise by an average of fifty to sixty per cent., but with properties that are decontrolled by the Act, of course, by law the sky's the limit so far as rents are concerned (after the fifteen months' standstill period).

Other Provisions

The Act legalises the charging of premiums for tenancies (except that no premiums can be charged for a period of three years in respect of properties decontrolled by the Act), so landlords will shortly be back to the happy days

of "key money." Furnished tenancies, too, within the decontrolled categories of rateable values will be decontrolled, and the Rent Tribunals will no longer have jurisdiction over them. These are the main provisions of the Act, although there are a host of other minor provisions, re-enactments and repeals of sections of earlier Acts.

Rates

The substantial increases in the rates on living accommodation now being put into operation by practically all local authorities are mainly caused by the Government decision to de-rate business premises by a quarter. This is, in effect, a calculated swindle, for when the new valuation list was published last April, it was solemnly declared that the rate payable on dwelling-houses would increase little if at all. Now one finds that business premises which stood the greatest increase under the new valuation, have been relieved of this burden, which has been passed over to residential property.

Council Tenants

Council tenants, too, are affected by the increases in rates, but in addition to this, the withdrawal of housing subsidies and the increased interest on loans obtained by local authorities have resulted in a considerable rise in the rents payable by council and corporation tenants. The average increase in London is about 3/6 per week for a single-bedroom flat, 5/- for a double-bedroom flat, and proportionally more for larger flats, but some London boroughs are increasing rents by as much as 10/- or 12/6 per week. This has brought about a certain amount of unrest, and demonstrations have been held in many boroughs, although with little result, and even less understanding on the part of the demonstrators.

While one uses the term "Council tenant," this is really a misnomer in the meaning of the Acts, as in fact the provisions of the Rent Restrictions Acts do not apply to the occupants of Council flats, and they are not even "tenants" in the correct sense of the term. They are merely licensees who have no security of tenure, and their rents are fixed at any figure that the Council considers reasonable.

What are the motives?

What, then, is the reason behind the Government's action, which on the face of it appears to guarantee their defeat in an election, and provides the likelihood of further industrial unrest?

The economics of the matter have been fully dealt with in these pages, so it is unnecessary to repeat the arguments. With regard to the loss of votes, the Tories, after the Suez debacle, were hardly at the height of their popularity, and their proposed measures over rents, although unpopular, are unlikely to make much difference one way or the other, especially in view of the fact that they can now expect some support over these measures from those people who will now be able to obtain accommodation, albeit at very high rents. In any case, the Tories know perfectly well that the election issues of today will not be the issues of two years' time, when their term of office runs out. One might also speculate as to whether the Tories are over-anxious to win the next election anyway, having regard to the precarious

economic circumstances of Britain.

Then one must look at the post-war background of rent-restriction. Since 1945 we have been passing through a period of expansion and full employment, when, by all the rules, workers are in a favourable position to press for wage increases. Due to inflation, the wage freeze, the T.U.C.-Labour Party alliance, and other factors, very few real gains were made by workers up to 1954. It seems likely, though, that if Rent Restriction had been abolished before then, wage claims would have come fast and furious, and employers, with full order books and an acute shortage of manpower would have been hard put to it to refuse them. Seemingly the present Government is now prepared to face this.

Lastly, economists have for years been telling the politicians that a disastrously excessive amount of capital investment has been taking place in housing, which formed the largest single item of British capital expenditure. The Tories tried curtailing this expenditure by withdrawing housing subsidies, squeezing the Building Societies and Banks, and raising interest rates. Apparently this did not go far enough, and so the Rent Act provides the answer.

The Opportunists

It can be seen, then, that this is the time, from the Tories' point of view, to start to dispose of Rent Restriction, which was designed as a wartime measure and has now outlived its usefulness. The new Act is, in effect, an attempt to return to pre-war "normalcy," with few workers being able to buy houses, and the majority of workers forced to put up with overcrowded conditions in order to economise on rents. (One might remember that this "normalcy" included a million and a half unemployed.)

From all this, one hopes that workers will realise (in case they hadn't realised it before) just how hollow was Mr. Butler's assertion that the standard of living would be doubled in twenty-five years, and just how empty were the election promises to solve the housing problem. Of one thing workers can be sure—that this Act will not get more houses built, and will not in the slightest degree solve the problem of overcrowding and bad housing. One might add also that the Labour Party's proposals to nationalise rent-controlled property and put up the rents will do just as little to solve them. The solution to the problem is fairly obvious—that is, for building workers to build decent homes for people to live in, without landlords, without investment, and without rent-control or rents. The trouble is that Capitalism does not permit of simple solutions of this kind, and so we go on, eternally arguing about what are no more than the effects of an irrational, crazy social system, instead of doing the obvious thing—to replace that system by a sane and reasonable one.

A. W. I.

Correction

Due to an error the suburb of Mexico City where Trotsky was assassinated was printed as *Singhalese* instead of *Coyocan*, in the "Odds and Ends." August SOCIALIST STANDARD, p. 122.

ED. COMM.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

The Autumn Delegate Meeting is being held at Head Office on Saturday and Sunday, October 5th and 6th; fuller details will appear in the October issue, but this is a reminder so that Comrades can have ample time to make arrangements to attend.

Outdoor Propaganda. Good meetings were held in London and the Provinces during the fine weather in July, but the rain dampened some enthusiasm at meetings during the latter part of August. Successful meetings were held during July and August in Nottingham and Manchester, when London speakers visited these towns. The London Comrades were very happy to be so warmly welcomed in Nottingham, especially, and the Propaganda Committee would like to arrange for further visits to the Provinces when speakers are available.



A Joint Discussion is being held on Thursday, 19th September, between four members of the Wansted Forum and four members of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. The title is: "That Splinter Groups hinder the Progress towards Socialism." Full details are given under "Notices" in this issue. P. H.

HOW WELL IS THE "WELFARE STATE"?

(Continued from August SOCIALIST STANDARD).

THE reader of the previous articles under this title will have seen that all is not well in the "Welfare State." It is, besides, significant that more often than not, the term is applied sarcastically, as a joke. If the writer quoted the pattern of Austria, this is only because of his first-hand information on a country with a reputation for, and boasting of, its social welfare schemes, even though equally frequent criticisms of its social evils flatly contradict the praise.

Thus a recent Vienna daily paper wrote: "We still have a fearful housing problem, with all the social evils and misery resulting therefrom. No long queues of automobiles, no fine facades, and no richly stocked and brilliantly illuminated shop windows should deceive us about the ugly pictures behind. Despite the enormous economic progress of the last few years, Austria is not yet among the well-to-do of this earth." . . . "Let us carry the wave of readiness to help which we showed towards the Hungarian refugees, into our own land. Let us, when the appalling need of the neighbour has been alleviated, clear away our own misery!" What? Misery in the Welfare State, of which the "socialist" Sozialminister Proksch says: "The Welfare State brings welfare to everybody and therewith guarantees wellbeing to every citizen."

Money for the Salzburg Festival

When the "socialist" Vice-chancellor was touring the country in a campaign to get himself elected as federal president, he discovered to what he called his "astonishment" that in addition to the large depressed areas of Lower Austria and the Burgenland, there are "depressed areas" also in Carinthia and in the province of Salzburg which had not directly suffered from Russian depredations and loot. In winter one-third of all insured persons are without work there. The burgomasters who had come to listen to the candidate, told him of their cares and their troubles. "When I am in Salzburg," said one of them, "I see work proceeding on the Festival Playhouse; it is very nice, but when I come home and see the cows

standing knee deep in water, because of the lack of protective river embankments against floods, which turn roads into an impassable quagmire, I ask myself whether there really is no money for us. Every day tractors have to haul out autos stuck in the mire." (Millions throughout the world might ask themselves similar questions when they read of the astronomical sums spent on armaments, and that a small clique of parasites can live in luxury and idleness in the fine resorts of the world while the people everywhere are grappling with terrible housing problems and sink daily deeper into the quagmire of their misery). Similar conditions obtain in other countries, regardless of whether they are kingdoms, republics, democratic or totalitarian, whether they falsely style themselves Socialist or Communist, or what you will. The ruler of all of them is King Capital, with his retinue of privileged drawers of rent, interest and profit, and leaving to the mass of the people the residue, of poverty and misery. To those who want a distinction to be made between this and the other side of the iron curtain, here is what it amounts to:—

Two Sides of the Iron Curtain

Economically, the iron heel of capitalism treads and exploits the workers in the West as in the East, differences of standards of living notwithstanding. Whether private owners of property and bond-holders of nationalised industries use their wealth for the purpose of living on rent, interest and profit (the surplus-value wrung from the workers), as in the West, or whether all the surplus-value is exclusively collected, controlled and disposed of by a clique of usurpers of power, ruling by means of their secret police and the armed forces, as in the East, makes little, if any, difference to the exploited—the working class. The latter are without property anyway on either side of the iron curtain, and have to exist on the sale of their labour-power to the employers. And on BOTH sides the State disposes, as it thinks fit, of the wealth and the surplus value (extracted either direct from the industries or by taxation), a huge amount of it going, of course, to the maintenance of its coercive machinery: the

judiciary, the police, and the armed forces.

Politically, the iron heel of capitalism crushes the critic and the opponent of the powers that be in the East by deportation to forced labour camps, prison or death; in the West by sacking him from his job, and so exposing him to pauperism.

King Capital still rules

Labour leaders and "communists" may prattle of past "proletarian revolutions," of "Declarations of the rights of man," of "social justice." The much boasted "Rise of the working class" finds the workers still on their knees before their master: Capital. He looks down upon them and only smiles a superior smile at assertions that he is supposed to be dead and done. And when last year in Hungary some of his infuriated victims attacked and felled to the ground a monument to one of King Capital's particularly brutal and obnoxious defenders, thunder and lightning struck the earth, and the world still reverberates from the impact. 200,000 had to flee for their lives and others paid and are still paying, the penalty for their foolhardy desecration and blasphemy, and for their illusions.

No, the "Rise of the working-class" (which should more appropriately be called "the rise of the labour leader") and the socialism of the "Socialist International" has not affected the rule of capital and money. Kings, ex-kings and queens, dukes and duchesses, princes and princesses, Indian and Arabian potentates, big land-owners, shipowners, and other millionaire industrialists and magnates, bishops and popes still live in their sumptuous castles and palaces, leading lives of luxury and idleness. They need not fear for their property and privileges as long as the working-class vote for the Gaitskells and the Bevans, as they did for the Attlees and Ramsay MacDonalds, and their colleagues on the Continent, the Guy Mollets, the Spaaks, the Ollenhauers, the Neeuws, the Schaerfs, and the rest of the lackeys of capital. Labour leaders now contribute their plans and suggestions to the so-called "Disarmament" talks in London and thereby demonstrate to the capitalist class that they are at least equal to, or claim to do better than the other statesmen in an effort to save the big Powers' talks from final breakdown. Like all the other statesmen, the "International Socialists" assembled in Vienna in July did not even mention the Cause of the multitude of problems confronting the world, but tendered advice to the Powers. They "viewed with deep concern the continued tension among the big Powers. A glance at the centres of tension in Europe, North Africa, in the Middle and Far East, confirms in a shocking manner the uninterrupted threat to, and violation of, the principles of self-determination of the peoples, the danger to the holy and unassailable rights of the personality, of freedom and social justice." (Vienna Arbeiter Zeitung, 7/7/1957). We will save the reader from more of the platitudes and clap-trap of the Resolution agreed to by this "International Socialist Congress," but what Mr. Gaitskell said in the discussion on the international situation bears repeating and remembering. He called "for a separate agreement not tied to a general disarmament pact, to stop atomic and hydrogen bomb explosions." "It would be wrong," he said, "to make the suspension of tests dependent on a ban on nuclear weapons, although Socialists wanted this too."

So today it is disarmament and atom-control, to-

morrow it will probably be a crusade against, or for, Colonialism (with the French "socialist" Guy Mollet for, and the Austrian "Marxist," Dr. Benedikt Kautsky, against), or any other problem facing the capitalist class. Kautsky describes England and France as the "sick men of Europe," and advocates the eradication of the last trace of colonialism, if the "unification of Europe" is to be achieved. Now Germany was unified before the war, America achieved its unification long ago, but has this solved the social problem? Is it really too much to ask of a "Marxist" to try advocating the eradication of capitalism for the solution of its problems?

It is a pity that Kautsky cannot persuade his comrade Mollet to write off the (French) colonial empire, as Holland has done, according to Kautsky, with such conspicuous success that it is "one of the economically healthiest states on the Continent." Millions of natives in the liberated colonies will probably still be looking for the benefits of having exchanged one clique of exploiters (the foreigner) for another set (the native).

Nonsense about India, Japan, etc.

Under the slogan: "Like Renner, like Korner," the "Socialist Party of Austria" have been boosting one of their leaders, Dr. Adolf Schärf, for the job of Austrian President, and indeed, if these leaders emulate their predecessors in one thing more than in another, it is in betraying their ignorance of Socialism; or, if they do understand it, in betraying the great cause. If the late Dr. Renner asserted that "two of the greatest empires are already being controlled by the working-class," the S.P. of Austria's vice-chancellor, back from a world tour, reported to the Party conference that:

"In India Socialism had become a matter of course. Gandhi had made the fundamental ideas of democratic Socialism the common ideal of the Indian people."

"The Congress Party's programme can be considered as almost socialistic. Even those who do not want to be Socialists, can no longer do without its ideas."

Dr. Schärf found "big socialist movements in Nepal and in Pakistan"; in Ceylon the Prime Minister is a "socialist." In Burma the government is under "socialist leadership." In Indonesia one million "socialist" votes were polled at the last election.

Japan was also reported to have its tremendous "socialist" movement. One town—Kioto—with 1½ million inhabitants, has a "socialist" administration—like red Vienna.

Israel has its "socialist" Prime Minister, Ben Gurion, whose party is the "strongest in the land." Emulating the British Labour Party, which brought in the A-bomb, the Israel "socialist" government is now said to be contemplating its introduction also. Although the Austrian "socialist" Vice-Chancellor was one of the chief promoters of the new Austrian army, there has been no suggestion yet of emulating the big brother across the Channel in the matter of A-bombs. They are apparently content with "conventional weapons"—for the time being, at any rate.

Concluding his report, Dr. Schärf said: "In the wide territories of which I have spoken, Socialism is so strong that even classes whose interests are not represented by Socialism acknowledge its superiority, and endeavour to benefit as much as possible by its ideas."

Ignorant of Socialism

The fact that prominent leaders like those quoted see millions of Socialists throughout the world and Socialism having already become a world power, proves that

the misrepresentation of Socialism and the theft of Socialist symbols is either so deeply ingrained as to have made those leaders quite unconscious of their fraud, or that they have never at all understood the implications of the great cause. The dilemma which America presents to these pseudo-Socialists would seem to well bear out the point. Here is a country reputedly not only with a standard of living higher than in any "socialist" or "Welfare State," but also with social services on the European pattern, though denying that these things have anything whatever to do with Socialism. It is a policy of mere self-preservation for capitalism, nothing else. So, with a sneer at those "pundits" who would "represent America as purely capitalistic," Dr. Schärf attributes it all to Socialist influence, although he has to admit that there is no big Socialist party in America.

Socialists could wish nothing better than that the statements that there are already millions of Socialists throughout the world were true, because the end of capitalism and war would then be within sight; but unfortunately it is not so.

A question that invariably crops up at "International Socialist" and "Communist" Party Conferences is the framing of a declaration of principles. A difficult job indeed for parties without principles, and operating with nothing but capitalist reform programmes fraudulently clothed in vague and distorted Socialist language. So the committees appointed to work out a new party programme usually shelve the task and no more is heard about it.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editorial Committee.

In the August issue Mr. John Wyatt, in answer to the criticism of the report of the debate on "Socialism versus Religion," as reported in the June issue, writes: "If the New Testament is read aright, one can find very much to support Socialism." In so far as our understanding of Socialism is concerned, it arises out of capitalism through the class struggle. There is no "turn the other cheek" about it. Many of the teachings of Christ were devoted to telling the people (the slaves) to put up with the conditions in which they lived for treasure to come in heaven. We are determined to wage a struggle against labourites and alleged Socialists as well as avowed capitalists—so different from the pacifism of the New Testament.

Mr. R. Smith writes—quoting the report of the debate above: "The existence of religion presupposes a belief in the existence of God." Then he takes me to task because I asked my opponent for proof of the existence of God. What's wrong with this? Nobody will doubt that religious people believe in God, but because they believe in God this does not prove that He exists. Socialists believe in Socialism, but that does not prove that Socialism exists.

H. JARVIS.

Even when these leaders on occasion vaguely declare their aim to be the "liberation of the peoples and man from their dependency on a minority which owns and controls the means of production," their actual policy is in direct contradiction to any such aim. The real implications of Socialism are completely ignored, so much so that most workers, when told that under Socialism there could, of course, be no buying and selling, will say that they never heard of it, and call it a Utopia. Yet if Socialism does not mean the end of these things, the word would be meaningless. The writer cannot do better than quote here from the leaflet "Introducing the SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain," which says:—

"The aim of the S.P.G.B. is to replace Capitalism by a world-wide social system in which the means of production and distribution would cease to be privately owned and would pass to the whole community. This would bring to an end the present competition for markets and sources of raw materials between the different countries that causes international rivalries and leads to war. Under Socialism goods would not be produced for sale and profit but would be produced solely for the use of mankind. All forms of income derived from property (profits, rents and interest) would disappear. The economic problem to be tackled by a Socialist society would be the problem of organising the able-bodied population to co-operate in producing food, clothing, houses, and all the other articles and services needed for the full life of human beings. All persons would have free access to the things they needed, production and distribution being in accordance with the Socialist principle:—'From each according to ability; to each according to need.'"

"Socialism cannot be brought about inside the Capitalist social system. One social system must be replaced by the other and Socialism is necessarily international."

(To be continued).

R.

Edinburgh.

Editor, the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Dear Sir,—John Wyatt's letter in August issue shows a complete misunderstanding of Jesus Christ. He states (truly enough) that he was poor, but it is false that he was executed for opposing the state church.

At his trial before Pilate, the current *Encyclopædia Britannica* says his answers were "ambiguous" (not strictly truthful). Despite that, Pilate opposed his execution and, literally, washed his hands of the whole affair.

Yet, significantly enough, after he was crucified Pilate insisted on allowing a sign to remain above his head derisively entitling him "the King of the Jews."

The real reason for Christ's condemnation was his obstinate mystery policy which he practised. Hence, he compelled the Jews to ask him: "How long will you make us doubt? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." (John X, 24). This policy so infuriated the contemptuous masses that when Pilate gave them a Passover chance to release him they unanimously chose to save the robber-murderer Barabbas!

Finally, the Christian dogma that Jesus died to save humanity from their sins is completely contradicted by his very last, despairing words: "My God, why hast thou forsaken me."

Inasmuch as all events are rigidly determined, Christ's cry was both philosophically false and religiously blasphemous!

Yours truly,

HENRY MYERS.
London.

A SOCIALIST PRINCIPLE RE-EXAMINED

At each general election the Tory Party tells the electors that it intends to make changes in the law or in the administration of the law. Among the changes promised in 1955 were lower taxes, smaller classes in schools, legislation to safeguard the employment of children, changes in the rating system, more Scotsmen for Scottish affairs, reform of the House of Lords, and encouragement of the Welsh language in Welsh schools. In addition to definite promises, there were expressions of "anxiety," "sympathy," and so on, about other problems. The Labour Party had a similar list; it included action against monopolies (the Tories only undertook to be anxious about this); smaller classes (like the Tories, but using the phrase "more teachers"); respect for the national culture of Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, and "full employment" in the first two, but only the promise of "new industries" for the third. The main purpose of these promised "reforms" is transparently clear—they are to attract the votes of interested people, the Welsh and the Scots, parents of young children, small traders afraid of monopolies, and so on. The politicians and business men who control the Tory Party are not trying to persuade the electors to make great changes in present social arrangements; their purpose is just the opposite. They like the arrangement that makes 10 per cent. of the population the owners of 90 per cent. of the accumulated wealth of the country, and they want to be elected and control the government so that they can keep it that way. They promise to make small changes in order to have power to prevent big ones. At the 1955 election they were the most successful of the "reformers." They and their associates got 49.8 per cent. of the votes cast while the Labour Party got only 46.3 per cent. The Liberals and the Communists and the I.L.P. were also there before the electors, trying, though with much less success, to get votes on a list of promised reforms.

Socialists fight the Reformist Parties

The Socialist Party of Great Britain on principle has no list of reforms, either between elections or at elections. We do not seek the votes of people who want reforms of the present social system. The only votes we seek and receive are for the purpose of getting rid of the present social system and replacing it by Socialism. We do not support campaigns for reforms or associate with reformist organisations. The S.P.G.B. was formed in revolt against the uselessness of reformism, and to fight the reformist organisations, including such bodies as the Labour Party. The Socialists who founded the S.P.G.B. had had long experience of that sort of thing in the Social Democratic Federation, from which they broke away. The reformist organisations are the enemies of Socialism.

The Socialists who, back in the times of the S.D.F., thought they could be reformists as well as Socialists, had a neat theory to justify themselves. They were, at first, comparatively clear about what Socialism is and what its attainment involves. They knew, for example, that it meant dispossessing the capitalist class and transferring the means of production and distribution to society. They knew that it involved ending property incomes and the production of articles for sale and profit. But it was, they said, impossible to make headway with

the clear-cut object of Socialism because the workers were too stupid to understand and accept it: they dubbed the S.P.G.B. the "Impossibilists." They said they knew a better way. They would keep Socialism as their ultimate aim, but in the meantime they would unite the workers on programmes of reform and lead them on to Socialism. They refused to believe our contention that fighting for reforms leads to confusion, builds up a purely reformist organisation, and ends by burying and forgetting the Socialist aim that was supposed to be the only justification for Socialist activity. Now the S.D.F. is dead, but the evil that it and the I.L.P. did lives on in the Labour Party, and everything that the S.P.G.B. foretold has come to pass.

Immediate demands

The S.D.F. had a long list of "palliatives" or "immediate demands"; items to rally the workers and be brought at once into operation while we were waiting for Socialism. In the list exactly 50 years ago were such trifles as abolition of the House of Lords, abolition of the monarchy, and repudiation of the national debt. Of course, none of these demands has been carried, and hardly anyone in Labour Party circles now even wants them.

If someone had the temerity to propose them today at the T.U.C. or Labour Party, the delegates would be dazed with astonishment. What, abolish the dear old Lords, where superannuated Labour M.P.s can now go and draw their three guineas a day? No more medals and honours from the Queen, and no more garden parties at Buckingham Palace? Repudiate the national debt, where millions of pounds of trade union funds are invested? The only monarch abolished in these 50 years was Edward VIII, forced to abdicate by a Tory government, and the monarchy now has no more fervent supporters than the Labour Party. Of course, there were many other immediate demands in the list that have been carried, but without the slightest effect in alleviating or palliating the condition of the workers. One of these was the demand that M.P.s should be paid. Free, gratis and for nothing we offer to any enterprising vote-catcher the idea of fighting an election on a demand that M.P.s should be deprived of the increase of pay they recently voted themselves while the Prime Minister was chiding the workers for their ill-advised wage claims: he would be certain of quite a lot of votes from the envious citizenry.

The Independent Labour Party also had a list of reforms, described as "means" to Socialism. It was a less ambitious list than the one used by the S.D.F. and, therefore, more of its valueless demands have been achieved, but widows, orphans and the sick and disabled are still whistling for the "adequate provision" and "state pensions for every person over 50" that the I.L.P. had in its programme at the beginning of the century.

Restricted Rents and Restricted Wages

The S.D.F. fifty years ago had an "immediate demand" on housing. It was for the "compulsory construction of healthy dwellings for the people, and such dwellings to be let at rents to cover the cost of maintenance and construction only." It will be noticed that it had two aims, low rents and the abolition of slums. The

Tory Party and the Labour Party have both introduced much legislation on these questions, though the Tories have the distinction of first having introduced rent restriction and now being well on the way to abolishing it entirely.

The reformist demand for restricted rents is part of the myth that the workers' problems would be solved by low prices. In the 19th century it was the Liberal Party, representing the manufacturers, who wanted low prices and low rents, and it was they who secured the abolition of the Corn Laws so that cheap food imports would lower the cost of living—and wages. The Tory landlords lost, and the Liberal manufacturers gained, but not the workers. The same thing happened in 1915 when rent restriction hit the landlords and kept wages low, to help the manufacturers. Now, by a curious reversal of roles, it is the Labour Party that speaks for the export manufacturers and points out that higher rents will mean higher wages and hamper exports. The manufacturing capitalist's interest in low rents and low wages is understandable, but from the workers' standpoint it forgets that we live under capitalism in which the workers' living depends on what wages they can get. The Tories did not introduce rent control in 1915 in order to give the workers the benefit of low rents with high wages, but as part of a campaign to prevent wages from rising. And the Labour Government carried it on with precisely the same aim. While they were in office from 1945 to 1951 they used every effort to keep wages down, in spite of a rising cost of living. Official information on wage rates and the cost of living proves this, and it was admitted again by Mr. Harold Wilson, M.P., in the House of Commons on 25th July, 1957. Speaking officially for the Labour Party, he said:—

"I believe that the Unions have shown great restraint since the war. In a seller's market they could have made and exacted much bigger claims for their members than they have done." (*Hansard*, 25th July, Col. 637.)

To put the matter in perspective, we may take the figure given by the Labour Party spokesmen in the Rent Control debate on 21st November, 1956. They said that the new Rent Act would add about £100 million a year to the workers' rent bill. This may be compared with the Labour Government's policies which added thirty per cent. to the workers' cost of living between 1945 and 1951. That thirty per cent. rise added, not £100 million a year to the workers' cost of living, but at least £1,000

million a year, and probably very much more. Against the opposition of the Labour Government, with its "wage restraint" policy, the workers had to fight continuously for higher wages, and fell far short of catching up, though by a more aggressive policy since the Tories came in they have now succeeded.

No Cure for Slums

The second part of the old reform demand was "healthy dwellings"—the abolition of slums. Every government has promised to deal with slums, but the problem is greater now than at any time in half a century, and the number of slums is growing fast. This fact is the Tories' excuse for abolishing rent control on the ground that with restricted rents old houses are not kept in repair and are falling into slumdom by the hundred thousand. The Labour Party does not deny this; that is why they are not prepared to re-introduce the old restrictions if they get back into power. In the Labour Party pamphlet, "Homes of the Future" (1956, page 49), appears the statement:—

"Rent control has been quoted as the main reason for the deterioration in the condition of rented property since 1920. That it is one of the reasons cannot be denied, but it is by no means the only one."

In the same pamphlet is the admission that the Labour Party policy of having rented houses taken over by the local authority and put in good repair will also mean higher rents, described as "a moderate increase in rent" (p. 13). In short, the reformers cut their own throats. They wanted capitalism to give them low rents and also the abolition of slums, and the one destroyed the other. They thought they were being "practical," not impossible, like the S.P.G.B. They thought of everything except the one thing that matters, that we are living under capitalism.

According to the original band of "socialists" who wanted to work through reforms, it was all supposed to be a quick way of achieving the objective of Socialism. And after fifty years of it capitalism is as firmly entrenched as ever, and if a Labour Government comes in again its position will actually be reinforced, for the latest nostrum of these "socialists" who have no time for Socialism, is that the Labour Government will buy shares in big companies! Muddle-headed as the S.D.F. and I.L.P. forerunners of the Labour Party were, this would make Hyndman and Keir Hardie turn in their graves. H.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

A Warning to Irish Workers

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, Sept. 1907).

There can be no relief for the oppressed Irishmen in changing an English robber for an Irish one. The person of the robber does not matter—it is the fact of the robbery that spells misery. National divisions are a hindrance to working-class unity and action, and national jealousies and differences are fostered by the capitalists for their own ends.

The crowd of hungry "intellectuals" clamouring for jobs within and without the Irish Parliamentary group

do not represent the interests of the working class in Ireland. They do not, indeed, profess to favour other than the capitalist interests, provided that the landlord or capitalist be Irish, but the Irish capitalist is in no wise more merciful than the English exploiter. The national sentiment and perennial enthusiasm of the Irishmen are being exploited by the so-called leaders in the interests of Irish capitalism, and the workers are being used to fight the battles of their oppressors. The Irish capitalist rebels against the English capitalist only because the latter stands in the way of a more thorough exploitation of the Irish workers by Irish capital. Let the thieves fight their own battles!

(From an article on "Sinn Fein" Policy.)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

SEPTEMBER



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

ALL BROTHERS UNDER THE SKIN

WHEN Socialists say that the workers in all countries ought to get together because they all suffer the same kind of hardships, live under the same social system and have the same interest in establishing Socialism, our opponents give us a curious medley of answers. From one quarter we are told how different the "British way of life" is from the way foreigners live—and how much better. From other quarters the story is that some foreigners are so much better placed. But just how different is the way different countries are managed? Look at wages, for example. In every country in the world, and at all times and irrespective of the political label of the rulers, you can be quite certain that those rulers will be saying that their hearts bleed for the workers, and that they believe in higher wages, but that just at present they cannot do anything about it because things are not going too well and the country cannot afford it.

You will also find that in each country there will be no difficulty at all in finding vast sums of money for armaments.

Again, if the workers get tired of waiting and come out on strike, you may be quite sure that the Government will oppose the wage demand and try to break the strike. Two countries have just been in the news, India and Poland. In India the Post Office workers demanded more pay and had been demanding it for quite a long while. The government refused it and made the usual plea of not being able to afford it, though they can afford armaments in plenty, and are reported to be considering making the A-bomb. The Post Office workers decided to strike, and were promptly met with drastic action by

Mr. Nehru, the Prime Minister, in the form of an anti-strike Bill rushed through Parliament in a few days. "Those taking part in illegal strikes will be liable to imprisonment, or fines, and may be arrested without warrant." (*Manchester Guardian*, 8th August, 1957.)

So the strike was called off and the government has promised to set up a pay commission, which is taken to mean that there may be a small increase of pay.

And Poland

If the "new" India shows just the same kind of government resistance to wage claims as does Britain, what do we find in "new" Poland?

On Monday, 12th August, the bus and tram men in Lodz, second largest city in Poland, came out on strike for higher pay. The *Daily Worker* (14th August, 1957) published a report from their representative in Poland which admitted that the tramway workers have been preparing for the strike for weeks, and that the Polish Government is agreed that the men's demands "are not exorbitant, having regard to living standards, but they simply cannot and will not be met because the country cannot afford them."

The *Daily Worker*, which has been kept busy in recent months declaring support for strikes of workers in Britain, including bus workers, did not support the Polish strike. It admitted, but did not condemn, the use of militia in the strike. The *Daily Worker* reported as follows:—

"The militia, to disperse the workers and avoid inviting trouble, threw tear gas capsules, not bombs. There were no fights between the militia and the workers. The troops were not called in, although among the lorries mobilised for various institutions to carry people to work, one-third were military vehicles driven by soldiers."

Apparently the people of Lodz were not as much comforted as the *Daily Worker* correspondent by receiving tear gas out of capsules instead of out of bombs, for the *Daily Mail* correspondent in Lodz reported the following conversation:—

"The minister of Local Government, Stanislas Sroka, tried to persuade the strikers to break up their demonstration and return to work. They defied him. One woman, waving a tear-gas cartridge in his face and wiping tears from her eyes, demanded: 'Is this what you use against women?'" (*Daily Mail*, 13th August, 1957.)

But after the Polish authorities had resisted the demands that led eventually to the strike, they partially gave way and made the offer of a small increase, which the strikers regarded as insufficient. The amount offered would have cost £4,000,000, according to the *Daily Mail* (13th August, 1957).

One other detail of the Polish strike must surely make the British worker think that the government in Poland must be like that in Britain. When governments nationalise railways, buses or other services and industries, they always tell us that these things now belong to us. But members of the government habitually behave as if the nationalised undertakings belong to them, and it has a familiar ring, therefore, to learn that the Polish Minister of Local Government declared: "The tramways belong to the State, not to you, and they will run."

All the countries have capitalism, and all the rulers are brothers under the skin when it is a question of opposing workers' wage claims.

ARE STRIKES AND REFORMS ALIKE?

Romford, Essex.

Dear Editors,

I accept the S.P.G.B. point of view on all declarations except one in their position on "Reformism." The S.P.G.B. seem to suffer from a inconsistency on this problem.

The Party members, so it seems, can support the T.U. movement's struggle on the industrial field for increase in wages and better conditions. But what would be the position of the Party if their members supported the Old Age Pensions Association's demand for increased pensions?

In any case, what really is the difference between struggle for the day to day struggles for improvements through the Parliamentary system and the same kind of demands through the T.U. movement?

To be consistent the Party should either abandon their acceptance of struggle on the industrial field or alternatively accept such a policy on both the political and industrial fields.

The Party sneer at what is called the Welfare State, yet I am prepared to wager that more workers are given to support Capitalism and its economic system arising from gains made in their wages than through any benefits from the Social Insurance system. They talk almost with affection of the money they receive. I believe it is called Lolly!

However, I agree with you that the establishment of a system of World Socialism is the only real solution of the Social Problem.

Meanwhile I support "reform" on both the Parliamentary and Industrial Fields, and meanwhile the S.P.G.B. will continue to do so on the latter field.

Should you return or the S.P.G.B. supporters return a minority number of M.P.s, what will be their methods during the "Third Reading" of Bills before the House? Will they either "move" or vote on amendments during this state? I know you will understand the Parliamentary constitution.

It seems such a great pity Socialists are so divided and because they cannot agree on all points.

Am not a professional writer, but have done my best to state a case.

Yours fraternally,

SIDNEY WARR.

REPLY

The gist of our correspondent's letter is that trade union action and campaigns for reforms are really the same kind of thing and, therefore, it is illogical for the Socialist Party to support strike action but oppose reformism.

This is quite fallacious. Strike action and campaigns for reforms are alike in one thing—they can neither of them achieve Socialism. Where, then, is the difference?

By strikes workers can, according to the varying economic situation, resist wage reductions or gain wage increases and influence hours of work and other working

conditions. They, therefore, have a value for the workers within capitalism.

Campaigns for legislative reforms can operate broadly in only one way, through political action. Apart from mere demonstrations of protest, a body seeking a reform must either seek election for its nominees or help other political parties to secure election. In neither event is it or can it be a question of seeking election only on a Socialist policy for the establishment of Socialism—that being the S.P.G.B.'s position that our correspondent rejects. On the contrary, such reformist action can only secure the return of M.P.s committed to the perpetuation of capitalism; they have not and could not have a mandate to abolish it and institute Socialism.

This is the difference in principle between strike action and political reformism, and if our correspondent wants practical proof of our contention that the two are essentially different, he has only to look at the behaviour of reformist organisations when in power. They (Tories, Labour, Communist, etc.) all introduce reforms, but they all with one accord oppose strike action by the workers to get higher wages. They can very well see the difference between the reforms they enact and the wage increases they try their best to prevent.

Which brings us to our correspondent's plea that we should cease to be divided from the "Socialists" who are reformists. He omits to name them. Whom has he in mind? Is it the Communist reformists who ordered the slaughter of Hungarian workers and are now using troops to break a strike in Poland? Is it Nehru's government which uses emergency legislation to smash a Post Office workers' strike? Or is it the British Labour Party, whose spokesmen claim that they prevented the workers from getting the wage increases they could have got by striking?

Our correspondent also asks what a Socialist minority, if there were one, would do with regard to a measure in Parliament. If a measure, for example, a vote against armaments or war, were before Parliament Socialist M.P.s would, of course, take instruction from the Socialists, whose delegates they were, and vote accordingly.

One last point. Our correspondent shows in his letter that he holds the view (which we do not) that the workers are deterred from turning to Socialism by their wages and by the reforms imposed on them. But if our correspondent really believes this, and if he really wants Socialism, then his clear policy should be to support a party that would oppose reforms as well as wage increases, because, according to his view, this would hasten Socialism.

ED. COMM.

LETTERS FROM READERS INVITED

Our Annual Conference in April decided that a section of the SOCIALIST STANDARD be reserved for letters from readers as a regular feature. Readers are invited to send letters of comment and criticism and questions for answer. Letters should be kept as short as possible as space is limited, and the shorter the letters the larger the number that can be printed. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

DRUM

We have received a recent edition of the magazine *Drum*, published in Accra, in the new state of Ghana, edited by Mr. Drum and claiming the "Biggest Sale in Africa."

What is it like, this paper of the rising continent? Is there anything fresh about it? Hardly. Here are all the well-known features of the less-respected and therefore well-established British journals. Consider the advertisements. A Negro woman applies, with a fetching smile, the same brand of skin cream as a million budding English roses. Successful men (Negroes, sitting at many-telephoned desks) underline their success with the right shoe polish. And here is the father and wife and pica-ninnies, beaming vigorously and full of a popular laxative. Detergents and blood tonics jostle on the page with disinfectants and pep-pills.

There is an interesting article alleging the existence of slavery on the Spanish-held island of Fernando Po, in the Gulf of Guinea. This article reproduces a poster issued by the Anglo-Spanish Employment Agency, which promises a life of sophisticated leisure on Fernando Po, the poster sketches a Negro in traditional pukka-sahib garb, complete with topee and carrying an umbrella! A few pages are taken up with a chillingly meticulous description of the procedure followed in executions in James Fort Prison, Accra, including pictures of a doctor and a priest leaving just after a hanging. There are comic strips (one of them about a Negro boxer taking on a Chinaman in, of all places, Switzerland), some tit-bits, jokes, and a mystery story.

A heartbreak column is run by Dolly. A young man complains that his girl-friend drinks heavily, swears at him, has secret love affairs. Dolly's advice, "If the girl is given to having secret affairs, forget her, "... as such a situation is not a desirable one." To a teacher who has fallen for one of his pupils she says: "To have an affair with one of your pupils would be abusing your position. Maybe when she has completed, yes." And there is the usual heavily guarded reply to the anonymous, desperate one whose problem cannot be discussed in the column, but who had better tell her mother.

Many African nationalists think that the developing independent states of Africa will throw up some vague and far-described moral and cultural superiority over their European counterparts. *Drum* gives the lie to that. Apart from the black faces and crinkly hair of its illustrations, it would not be out of place in the hands of any typist on the rush-hour tube to the West End. Capitalism always must fill the workers' leisure with the inferior and shoddy, for to encourage them to think is dangerous. Hence the growth of the trash-press in this and other countries.

Now capitalism, lured by the markets and minerals, is developing in Africa. The markets it will exploit and the minerals develop. It will bring industrial organisation and the harsh, acquisitive sophistication that we in England know so well. That is in the future. For the present, if a reading of *Drum* is any guide, it has already brought, among other things, constipation and rheumatism, indigestion and neurasthenia. IVAN.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR M A.'s (Miracle Agents)

The *Schoolmaster and Woman Teachers' Chronicle*, journal of the National Union of Teachers, can never be accused of harbouring anything that could be labelled "revolutionary" or "seditious" thought; on the contrary, it has always, despite "differences" from time to time with this or that Minister of Education, been the champion of the British way of life; i.e., it supports the system of Capitalism whilst grumbling at the rewards. In supporting Capitalism it often goes to strange lengths. An example of this is afforded in the current issues. There we find a series of articles entitled "Religious Education in the Primary School." At the time of writing we have reached episode X, entitled "Teaching about the Miracles."

When we realise that the depository of the Christian religion—the Church—is today, apart from a hard core of "Fundamentalists," composed largely of "Apologists" of various degrees, one can indeed be curious as to how the question of Miracles can be explained in this day and age so that they do not lose their value in telling. It is the business of the author to do just this. The Rev. writer rushes to the aid of the teacher, to the harassed believer grappling with a situation which is getting increasingly difficult and also to those who have abandoned the struggle as far as Miracles are concerned, merely relating just those Biblical stories in which human virtues

are displayed, like sharing one's raiment with the more unfortunate, or the bravery of little David standing up to a giant.

One reads the article painfully. One sees that the idea is to "catch 'em young" (hence the emphasis on the Primary School). Religious belief being, as we are so often told, a matter of faith rather than knowledge, the teacher is expected to abandon his or her true vocation in order to mould the malleable minds of children in such a manner as to fit them into the estate it has "chosen God to place them" (and at the same time make them suitable material for Capitalist Society.)

Consider the grand attack against Unbelief. In true apologetic manner part X of the series defines the word "miracle" as "a wonder," "something contrary to the laws of nature," but qualifies this by quoting St. Augustine's definition as "contrary to what is known." It then goes on to discuss Old Testament miracles, and actually dismisses them as "pious legends." One cannot expect the Church to retreat all the time, and so we find that there are first and second class miracles; i.e., those of the Old Testament, done by ordinary men, and those of the New Testament, performed by Christ himself. We feel sure that the poor teacher now feels on safer ground, especially when we read (in connection with miracles first class): "Belief in God is not to be made

dependent upon belief in every event attributed to Him." (We can now hear the teacher breathe a sigh of relief at being able to choose his miracles). We are next told that "a miracle is not so much an inexplicable event as an occurrence which brings an overwhelming sense of the presence of God." Quite a bit of verbiage this, meaning, one supposes, that a "miracle," though proven to be a natural phenomenon, can, because of the wonder, awe or curiosity it invokes, be said to prove the "presence of God."

Many natural phenomena have done this with varying degrees of awe, wonder, curiosity, etc., arising in the mind of the onlooker depending on the understanding of the times, from the rolling of the thunder to the explosions of the hydrogen bomb. Does the hydrogen bomb prove the "presence of God?"

The "Rev." writer, knowing what he is up against, says that despite the difficulties teachers have in teaching (about) miracles, *younger children* (our italics) will accept them naturally, and questions asked will result from curiosity rather than scepticism! So you see, teacher can now get on with her miracle lessons with no fear of attack from her class of five-year-olds!

It is hard to believe that the writer has ever read history. From the time when the Bible was first published in the vernacular, men have read an account of how the world began. It was their only source of knowledge. But in time this simple faith was shattered. Whilst in the Middle Ages learned Cardinals gathered to argue the number of Angels that could stand on a pin head and later, during the reign of Charles I, Archbishop

Usher "proved" that it was 4003 years 2 months 11 days and 6 hours from the Creation to the birth of Christ; today we have grown up somewhat, so that even leaders of religion now openly argue the authenticity of miracles, including the Resurrection, Heaven, and so on.

An attempt is obviously being made to capture lost ground, and the young, being defenceless, are the chosen victims.

"Miracles" cease as Nature's laws are better understood. When no one doubted them they abounded. They were lavished on the world. Now, when more and more deny them, when the Faith is in dire distress; when just a few of the miracles enacted in the desert of Sinai could shake the Modern World to its foundations and bring us rushing back to the arms of "Mother Church"; now, when the least expenditure in Miracles could bring the maximum result—Miracles cease. An attempt is made to keep them alive by means of stories told to impress the imaginative minds of the young.

When mankind finally breaks the last bonds of religion and realises itself as a long, upward progression, shedding its superstitions on the way, then we will have emerged from bondage to freedom. As Socialists we fight the powers "temporal and spiritual."

We leave you to cogitate over the words of a well-known hymn: "The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate. God made them high and lowly and ordered their estate." This, one suggests, would be a fitting hymn with which to end each lesson on "Miracles Made Easy for Children." Constant attention to the words is guaranteed to immunise the future worker from the virus of Socialism. W. BRAIN.

HOW DID YOU SLEEP LAST NIGHT?

Many reasons have been offered to explain the persistence of war, from sun spots to satanic dictators. Now Mr. Charles Cook, president of the National Federation of Bedding and Allied Trades, has hit on a spanking new one. At his trade convention at Scarborough on 24th May, he said: "Bad beds cause bad tempers. If Mr. Krushchev would allow us to design a bed for him, it could do more good for international relations than any number of diplomatic jamborees."

This remark must have provoked some very pained reactions in the Foreign Office (jamborees, indeed!) Let us consider one or two implications of it. First, we are pretty sure that when Mr. Krushchev retires after a night on the vodka he does so to an excellent bed—certainly a much better one than any Russian worker will ever know. But if Krushchev's bed is bad, how much harder and lumpier must Stalin's have been—he always seemed to be in a much worse temper than Krushchev. Then what about the period when the Russian and British governments were allies in the last war and we were flooded

with pictures of Stalin beaming through his moustaches? Did the great dictator change his bed in 1945? What about the others who change sides even more frequently than Russia did? For example, Marshal Tito must be in a different room, let alone bed, every night of his life.

Not to be facetious, let us grant that Mr. Cook may have been joking, that he may be one of those employers who is so interested in his job that he eats, drinks and sleeps (sorry) for it. Perhaps he was carried away in his enthusiasm. Thus we may excuse him; but we would feel even more kindly towards him if he would point out that the cause of modern war is in the relentless competitive struggle between capitalist groups who are trying to gain the upper hand in the world's markets. The profit which the worker produces is realised on the commodity's sale. Hence the struggle. That goes for all commodities, from tooth brushes to tankers. Including mattresses.

IVAN

"It has often and confidently been asserted, that man's origin can never be known; but ignorance more frequently begets confidence than does knowledge: it is those who know little, and not those who know much, who so positively assert that this or that problem will never be solved by science."

"Professor Huxley (J. H.) has conclusively shown that in every visible character man differs less from the higher apes than these do from the lower members of the same order of Primates."

CHARLES DARWIN.

Introduction to *The Descent of Man*, John Murray, 1901.

THE LAST HOTTENTOT AND THE FIRST BUSHMEN

SOcialists used to be asked whether it was necessary to wait for "the last Hottentot" to become a Socialist before Socialism could be established. It was not really necessary to answer, for expanding South African capitalism did it for us and swept him in. He probably goes back to his tribe at intervals, but, in general, he is a wage worker like most of us.

Like the rest of us, he, or his children, will eventually be introduced to Socialist ideas, and will accept them. Having no illusions about social or economic equality with his white bosses, he may even accept the ideas with startling rapidity.

There is an even more primitive group than the Hottentots—the Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert. Living in an arid, almost waterless region, they have acquired many of the characteristics of the camel, being able to consume very large quantities of meat and water when available, and then existing for days, or even weeks, until the next meal is obtained.

So remote are their habitations that little has been known about them until recently. But the pressing need of South African industry for labour has caused this difficulty to be overcome, as reported in the Johannesburg *Star* of March 1st, 1957:—

Bushmen, the wild, near-Pygmy tribe of the Kalahari Desert, who have always been considered too backward to learn how to work, are playing an important role in the production of gold at Stilfontein in the Klerksdorp District.

"At this highly productive, two-year-old mine yesterday, I watched primitive tribesmen, fresh from their nomadic life in the desert, sorting out the freshly crushed gold-bearing reef from waste rock with an unerring eye.

"We reckon that since employing Bushmen on this work, not one piece of gold reef has been wasted," Mr. J. V. Penberthy, the personnel officer, told me, "Their eyesight is fantastic."

The report goes on to describe the delight of the employers with their new source of labour, and the delight of the new labourers at the novelties of capitalism—boots, regular meals and cinema shows. It does not tell us what pay they receive, but it is safe to assume that this is considerably less than that obtained by other non-European workers, low as that is.

A hopeful sign, from the Socialist point of view, is the fact that the Bushmen are quick to "catch on" when a new concept is put to them. When our ideas reach South Africa in any quantity, we do not think the Bushmen will be unduly backward in understanding them.

J. O. B.

IS POLITICS A RACKET?

HE assures me with expansive worldliness that he is not interested in politics, and continues to instruct me that "... it's a dirty business ... a racket!" So he is not interested in what my dictionary tells me is "the science of government." With great temerity I inquire whether or not he casts his vote at elections. Yes, he votes at elections. Why? Well, according to him, there is a principle involved: "... The right to vote! Lose that and where will you be?" He launches into a diatribe about Hitlers and Stalins, and tells me about totalitarianism, finishing, as he began, with: "Lose the right to vote, and where will you be?"

In order to ascertain where we will be if we lose the right to vote, I wish to know where we are now: this I convey to him.

His rhetoric overwhelms me, and his knowledge of history ...! With calculated erudition he turns the pages of the past, telling graphically of the struggles of our forbears to win for us ("the common people") the right to choose our own form of government; he reminds me that "universal suffrage" is the strongest weapon in the arsenal of "the people." He leaves no gainsaying the truth of his instruction—truly have our forefathers won for us out of their blood, sweat and tears a great thing: the right to choose for ourselves, in defiance of any oligarchy, how we shall run our world.

He rests after this, and I take advantage of his silence to ask a few more questions. I confess first that he has proven his point, but that in so doing raises the gravest suspicion that we, "the common people," are ill-deserving the prize our forefathers paid so dearly for; that in fact we are downright unworthy of our democratic heritage, using it as we do. Did not he himself declare

politics to be "a racket"? What names should we apply to ourselves, we who permit the bright path to freedom, so hardly won for us by those who went before, to become the toll-road of racketeers?

Misuse of the Vote

We have the power to control our own destinies, and how have we used this power? Have we not poverty—oh yes, organised and catalogued in the bureaux of a "welfare state," but still poverty? Do we not still fear the boss will sack us, and us with next year's wages mortgaged for this year's necessities? Are we oblivious to the fact that we possess the measure of full employment; we do only because we make weapons of the most staggering potency with which to destroy one another? Is this the way we control our own destinies?

We have partly succeeded in relegating Nature to the role of the servant; invented the most complicated devices to ease our toils; developed the most intricate electronic marvels capable of working out formulæ at the press of a button that would normally require weeks of concentration by an army of mathematicians. We have conquered the gods and devils of our forefathers; are capable of providing a plethora of all the things needed by humanity; we CAN control our destinies, and yet we permit an archaic condition of social relationships to maintain conditions of want, misery and destruction. We are asked to fight totalitarianism which denies us the right to vote and choose our way of life: yet, given that right, we allow this terrible economic despotism to prevail!

He looks dejected. Lamely he agrees that this is the terrible truth—in fact, he assures me it is things being as I claim they are that forces on him the conviction that

politics are a swindle: he had always been aware that the Tories and the Liberals could do nothing about this sort of thing, but the Labour Party ...? They had PLEDGED themselves to destroy these evils, yet when they got the political reins the old Band Wagon just acquired new faces and rumbled on as before.

They don't love the Tories

It would appear, according to him, that there is just nothing we can do about it. With a knowledge of events that belies his alleged disinterest he illustrates for me the dismal failure of the Labour Party in their efforts to change the lot of the worker. Interpreting a gesture from me as an attempt to interject on behalf of that Party, he anticipates with: "And don't tell me they didn't get a chance; the people may not be very politically conscious, but they are not so stupid as not to know when they ARE well off—if they were why'd they sack the Labour Party? Don't tell me it was out of sentiment for the Tories!"

This, of course, is logic with a vengeance; no hair-splitting, nor playing with dubious statistics: the workers withdrew their allegiance from the Labour Party at the polls, in spite of the fact that that Party was allegedly the Party of Peace, Prosperity and Plenty. Either Labour had not delivered the goods, or the mass of the people had gone mad. On reflection it does seem peculiar—rather like the organised workers consciously and voluntarily cutting their living standards for the poor rich!

I have not told him yet that I do not support the Labour Party, and I am very happy that I do not, for I am a poor hand at political apologetics!

And he knows about the Communist Party too. As he indicts he seems to postulate my support for that which is indicted: accusingly he asks me why he should struggle to bring the British "Commies" to power. (Not knowing aught of political alchemy, I am incapable of giving, in the language of serious discussion, a reply.) He speaks of prison-type social security and the probable fate of bell-ringing shop stewards under a Soviet system.

And now again this pessimism pervades his talk: the utter futility of politics, the uselessness of trying. The sombre philosophy of disinterest—and despair.

I inquire whether or not society can afford the luxury of disinterest. If he was a fire-fighter whose fire-fighting activities had been unsuccessful in the past, could he morally justify this as a reason for refusing to deal with his next fire? Would not the unsuccessful fireman, troubled by his lack of success, demand of himself a complete re-approachment to the whole question of HIS UNDERSTANDING of the nature of fire and, accordingly, of the most successful method of combating it?

Angrily he accuses me of considering him an utter fool. I am insinuating, he accuses, that he does not understand that the poverty of the overwhelming mass of

the people, the soul-destroying insecurity with which we are faced, and the horror of stock-piled H-bombs arise from the existence in the world of a system of economic organisation that has long since outlived its usefulness—Capitalism.

Social Ownership

Hopefully I suggest that if Capitalism, with its private ownership of the machinery of wealth production is the basic cause of our problems, then is not the solution to be found in a system where these means of production are owned by society as a whole? No, I do not mean nationalisation. I reply to the unspoken criticism that shows in his eyes; I mean exactly what the word "owned" means, when not used in its political context by Labour or Communist politicians. Owned by the people in a way similar to that in which the family unit own a chair or the food in the cupboard—to be used by all in accordance with their self-determined needs, and abused by none. Poverty would be eliminated, for in such a society the keystone of production would be the satisfaction of human needs. Wages would cease to exist, for the old capitalist relationship of owner buying the labour-power of workers would no longer obtain; and since there would be no competition between rival groups of trade-seeking capitalists for markets, trade routes, sources of raw materials or cheap labour, workers would no longer be called upon to indulge mass murder on the battlefields of the world, and our H-bombs could take their rightful place (rendered duly harmless) in the museums of the world, with the other barbarous weapons of class-society.

Has he not said that the right to vote is the right to choose for ourselves the manner in which we shall run our world? It is exactly that right! We have wrung from the hands of the Master class a blank cheque on which we can write: "Socialism" and achieve a sane world! What stays our hands? Apathy, ignorance, and the confusion created by reformist political parties, like the Labour and Communist Parties, who tell us we should devote our lives to struggling for the apple, when we can win the orchard with less trouble!

He is a cautious man and is not yet convinced that the way of the Socialist Party is the only way forward for the working class; but now he is asking questions! We welcome questions, for we are not a Party of sheep being led into the pens of confusion and disillusionment by "leaders." We welcome questions because we are confident that if our fellow-workers face up to the reality of existence under Capitalism, made even more terrible today by the threat of atomic war, and "plague" us with questions, they, too, will join us in the struggle and bring nearer the dawn of Socialism.

R. MONTAGUE.

LABOUR'S TOMBSTONE

The New Policy on Nationalisation

THE Labour Party has produced a pamphlet with the title "Industry and Society," and a sub-title "Labour's Policy on Future Public Ownership." This pamphlet sets forth a change in the Labour policy which has been coming on gradually for a long time. The

excuse for this change is that:—

"The structure of industry is rapidly changing. If we could accurately describe the private sector of 1918 it would certainly present a very different picture from the private sector of today." (Page 11.)

Is this so? Let the pamphlet answer the question:

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Benzie Road, Dundee.

EDINBURGH. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh.

MANCHESTER Sec.: J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. 'Phone: DIDsbury 5709.

OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

REDHILL AND REIGATE DISTRICT—C. E. Smith, 88, Chart Lane, Reigate Surrey.

SWANSEA—Enquiries to V. Brain, 17, Bryn a Wellon Rd., Pencoolgi, Nr. Llanelly

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (Sept. 5th and 19th), at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: S. Roope, 42, Avalon Road, Orpington, Kent.

EALING Fridays at 8 p.m. sharp. Weekly from Sept. 6th at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCELS meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. E. A. Darrook, 51, Plant St., Glasgow, E.1. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (Sept. 11th and 25th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays (Sept. 2nd, 16th and 30th) at 8 p.m. at 76, Dunbarton Road, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 197, Mare Street, Hackney. Sec.: A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m., Sept. 11th and 25th, 1080, Goldhurst Terrace, (near) Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 111, Upper Tollymore Park, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.). Visitors welcome. Enquiries to J. G. Grialet, 17, Coatswood Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae" Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, Pelham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

DISCUSSION WITH WANSTEAD FORUM

at

WANSTEAD HOUSE, THE GREEN, E.11

(Two minutes walk from Wanstead Station)

Thursday, 19th September, at 8 p.m.

"That Splinter Groups Hinder the Progress to Socialism"

HACKNEY BRANCH — ECONOMICS CLASS

Wednesdays, September 11th and 25th and fortnightly thereafter at 8 p.m.

Co-op. Hall, 197, Mare Street, E.8.

Tutors: W. Read and E. Wilmott.

PARTY MEETING ON PRICE OF S.S.

In connection with the poll on the price of the S.S., a meeting of Party members has been arranged for Tuesday, 10th September, at 8.30 p.m. at Head Office.

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months (6 months, 3/-) for which 6/- is enclosed.

Name

(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

(State, if renewal, or new subscriber)

PUBLICATION DATE OF
"SOCIALIST STANDARD"

In order that copies of the SOCIALIST STANDARD can be on sale in the Provinces on the first day of the month, it has been decided to have it printed several days earlier. This requires that articles shall be delivered to the Editorial Committee at Head Office not later than the 14th of the month. Notices of meetings must also be sent in earlier than in the past, though it will sometimes be possible to secure their insertion later than the 14th.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 638 Vol. 53 October, 1957

The Wolfenden Report

COMMITTEE FRANK BUT CLUELESS

"In my realms," Queen Victoria is reputed to have said, "there are no such women." If the recommendations of the Wolfenden Committee become law, that happy state may be restored: not the one in which no prostitutes exist, but the realm wherein old ladies may assume that the unseen is the unreal.

The main findings of the Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution are by now too well known to need recounting. Briefly, they urge easier laws on homosexuality and harder ones on prostitution—that is, on street soliciting, the only offence with which prostitutes may be charged. There is no gesture towards ending or reducing prostitution; the Committee's aim is simply to brush the dirt under the carpet—to remove what the *Manchester Guardian* called "the scandalous spectacle now commonly presented by some streets in London and other big cities."

There can hardly be much objection to that, as far as it goes. The parade of streetwalkers is a sordid sight. How far does it go, however? Is anyone really going to feel better or more satisfied through knowing that they are on the 'phone and not the kerb, or because the invitation to five minutes of commercial, loveless love, is made indoors instead of in doorways?

That is not to imply that the Wolfenden Committee has been hypocritical. On the contrary it has done the only thing possible for it and, incidentally, accepted what some reformers will not see: that, in a social framework such as ours, prostitution cannot be done away with. "The law by itself cannot do so," says the Report. The alternative, therefore, was to regulate the prostitutes and try at least to see that their activities were addressed to whom they might concern.

Why cannot prostitution be stopped? The Report speaks of a need first for education and a changed moral sense among the community. The fact is, however, that there is almost nobody who would not like to see prostitution disappear and is not aware of the squalidness of everything and everybody connected with it; no words, for example, convey deeper contempt than "ponce" and "pimp." Moreover, it is overlooked that the toleration of prostitution owes a good deal to moralists who have condoned it as a kind of safety-valve for the family institution. Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, wrote:—

"That unhappy being whose very name is a shame to speak, who is scorned and insulted as the vilest of her sex, and doomed for the most part to disease and abject wretchedness and an early death . . . is ultimately the most efficient guardian of virtue. But for her the unchallenged purity of countless happy homes would be polluted. . . On that degraded and ignoble form are concentrated the passions that might have filled the world with shame."

HUNGARY AND SELF-DETERMINATION

HOW TO GET SOCIALISM?

MERDEKA IN MALAYA

THE MANAGERIAL REVOLUTION

IRISH ODDS AND ENDS

Registered for transmission to
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To look for the causes of prostitution via such questions as: "Why do women take to it?" is fatuous. The Wolfenden Report does state categorically, however, that "economic factors" enter into it scarcely at all nowadays. In a limited sense of "economic," meaning that girls do not now go on the streets as the alternative to destitution, this can be taken as true. Beyond that, it means very little. Many prostitutes, like the one who spoke on television, do it just for money—not out of distress, but because they want the things money buys. And this is no perversity, but our society's commonest ideal. Sir Miles Thomas said vehemently in a television programme a little time ago that anyone who did things for any other reason was insane (did he tell that to his workers, one wonders; or to Sir John Wolfenden?)

The real causes of prostitution are the economic and social conditions in which it lives and flourishes. It is, in fact, a product of the monogamous marriage system within the framework of buying-and-selling societies; its proverbial oldness is simply the long history of those societies. The ancient civilizations, which were highly commercial ones and had strong marriage traditions involving usually the subjugation of women, all had a great deal of prostitution. The Middle Ages had it, though the extent is uncertain. The earlier, pre-Industrial Revolution stages of capitalism had more than ever of it, just as they had more than ever of begging, squalor and crime. And almost any of Queen Victoria's subjects could have put her right: Lecky, or Charles Mayhew, or W. T. Stead who, to show what was going on, bought a girl of thirteen from her parents for £5—the understanding being that she was to enter a brothel.

Because prostitution has gone on so long, many people think it must be human nature. Well, it may become an enforced need, but it certainly isn't human nature to buy and sell that. In the primitive places and communities where you would expect human nature to be rampant, prostitution is unknown (at any rate until the traders and colonists arrive). Indeed, sex is a matter in which human nature needs only half a chance to assert itself in good and satisfying relationships between men and women, and one of the terrible things about capitalism is the number of people to whom even that half-chance is denied.

Of course, prostitution can be abolished. Do away with property-based, sale-and-profit society, and you do away also with the ubiquitous trading, bargaining and hawking which condition or take the place of all human relationships. Set down a no-property, common-ownership basis, and social relationships then express only human beings' needs—of which prostitution is not one. The Wolfenden Committee confesses impotence: reformers have failed with this as they fail with almost everything. Attitudes to prostitution have varied from ferocity to sentimentality, and today's "social problem" approach, but prostitution remains. You cannot, after all, remove the ugly rash without cleansing the patient's system.

The Committee's other concern, homosexuality, has had the lion's share of the press and broadcast discussion. In spite of all the arguing, the proposal that homosexual behaviour between consenting adults should cease to be a crime is not new or sensational. Edward Carpenter was stating their case, with the support of medical experts,

over forty years ago; so was J. A. Symonds. Various bodies for penal and moral reform (including the Catholic and Anglican Churches) have supported the proposal. Indeed, if it becomes law it will simply bring English law into line with that of France, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Holland and Belgium.

The real, age-old taboo on homosexuality is rooted in its antithesis to the family institution. Thus, it was punishable by death in the Old Testament tribes, because it threatened the birth-rate; thus though the Catholic Church wants it removed from the list of crimes, it remains "the sin crying to heaven for vengeance" in the Catholic Catechism. Its exact appraisal by society at large has always been related to the state of the family; here and there in history—in Greece, in Rome, in the Persia of the Arabian Nights—the circumstances have allowed toleration and even some degree of approval. Possibly the outcry against Oscar Wilde derived a good deal from the fact that most people, in the days of the platoon-sized family, were only too well bound to normal sexuality.

There is no reason for not being gratified that a small group of people may be released from the fear of vindictive legal penalties on their behaviour; equally, no reason for passing over the fact that another group now stands faced with harsher penalties. What remains, after three years' investigation and deliberation by the Wolfenden Committee, is that the Sunday papers will not be deprived of anything in material for their perennial Exposures of Vice. Perhaps it is unfair to mention only the Sunday papers, however: in his boyhood this writer heard preachers chill their audiences by speaking of the dens of vice that existed "in this very town; here, around us..." Not for some years did he realize—and his curiosity abate that the working-class district in which he lived, in the days of mass unemployment would not have kept a single prostitute for a single week.

Such problems as these are inseparable from the civilization in which we live. The prostitute and her customer, the homosexual with his secret, the ponce, the blackmailer, and the pervert are not outside but part of that civilization. With them stand the class division, the moral values, the family structure, the education, the "living standards," the entire social fabric which we know. Take a look, gentle reader, and ask: Is it worth it?

R. COSTER.

FOR YOUR NIGHT OUT

If you have five shillings to spare, go and see "The Witches of Salem"—it might come off soon. Even if its title does not sound very interesting, this new French film is unique. A gripping drama—reminiscent of Ibsen at his best—it has everything the heart could desire: a most moving love story, a good deal of direct, down-to-earth sex; a vivid portrayal of puritan life. More important is that you won't need to leave your critical faculties at home, for this is a movie that deals with the lives of real people. Always political, and an impressive study in mass psychology, it shows the struggle between rich and poor, between the Church and the people. One of those rare films that a Socialist should not miss to see. Script by Sartre, based on a play by Arthur Miller. Subtitles in English.

B. J.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Bradford Branch report a most successful outdoor meeting last month by Comrade Baldwin, at which two dozen S.S. were sold and some pamphlets. They express the hope of a repeat visit by Comrade Baldwin.

Comrade Gilmac in America. Comrade Gilmac has sent his first brief report from America, where he attended the Annual Conference of the W.S.P. in Boston. He reports that our comrades out there have been experiencing rather a thin time, but that this year's Conference is the best they have had. The members are full of enthusiasm, and their hospitality to him has been overwhelming.

The Socialist Party of Ireland. Socialists in large cities such as London, Glasgow, Sydney or Boston—where there are often quite a number of Socialists—know how difficult it is to get workers to listen to, and accept, the Socialist case. But for Socialists where there are only small groups or even single individuals, it is much more difficult—particularly in countries like Austria or Ireland, where the Catholic Church is very powerful.

Our comrades in Dublin and Belfast have an extremely difficult task, but putting the Socialist case in Co. Kerry is almost impossible.

During August two members of Fulham Branch, Comrades Newell and Garnham, visited Ireland, and whilst there visited our only comrade in Co. Kerry, Comrade Tim O'Sullivan, of Coolcorcoron, a tiny village about two miles out of Killarney. Comrade O'Sullivan told our comrades that the only politically conscious people in the whole of Co. Kerry are the Sinn Feiners; and they are fanatical nationalists, living mainly in the past! But still



our S.P.I. comrades, such as O'Sullivan and others in Ireland, are able to get something across. Besides their tongues they are armed with *The Manifesto of the Socialist Party of Ireland*, and copies of a free leaflet, *Introducing the Socialist Party of Ireland*.

The "Daily Herald" and the S.P.G.B. In reply to a letter previously published from a Labour Party reader, who enquired why it was that the Labour Party did not call itself the Socialist Party, the *Daily Herald* printed the following letter from a reader in Margate:

"It would be confusing and dangerous to re-name the Labour Party the Socialist Party, as this is the usual way in which people refer to a body already in existence—the Socialist Party of Great Britain."

To which the *Daily Herald* thought it fit to add the following explanatory comment:

The S.P.G.B., which broke away from the Social Democratic Federation in 1904, has a membership of 1,100. It is sometimes called the Small Party of Good Boys. It stands for "uncompromising opposition to all forms of capitalism, including that in the Soviet Union."

S. H.

HOW TO GET SOCIALISM

To the Editors of the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Sirs,—I like much your invitation of letters from readers. I desire to accept it because I am profoundly dissatisfied with your reply to Sidney Warr, whose address I should like to have seen given by you. Anonymous letters ought to be discouraged.

Mr. Warr will probably have to be content with your "reply," will, in fact, be expected to be. He laid himself wide open to a knock-out by his use of that beloved-of-politicians' word, "Reformism." What Sidney Warr really meant was Evolution. If he had said Evolution, how would you have answered? I hope to find out by using the term myself. *How do you get what you term "Socialism" otherwise than by Evolution?*

Incidentally, I object most strongly to your continuous abuse of the word principles. Principles have nothing to do with machinery. Principles are human and concern and govern human conduct. Look at the inhumanity of your reiterated "ownership." Ownership and morals cannot co-exist. To change society human values must annihilate material valuations. Where is your evidence that you recognise that what is wrong with society is its morals? Where is your recognition of the one and only commandment, Thou shalt not be selfish?

Yours sincerely,

DAVID MACCONNELL.

Beech House, Castle Street, Bakewell, Derbyshire.

REPLY.

Our correspondent objects to anonymous letters: Mr. Warr's letter on Reformism and Strikes (see September issue) was not anonymous, but we do not publish addresses unless we know that correspondents wish it.

We are interested to learn from Mr. MacConnel that Mr. Warr's letter about reformism was not the letter Mr. Warr really meant to write. According to Mr. MacConnel "what Sidney Warr really meant was Evolution." (Perhaps we shall now hear from Mr. Warr telling us what Mr. MacConnel's letter means.)

We are now asked: "How do you get what you term 'Socialism' otherwise than by Evolution?" As the establishment of Socialism (as distinct from retaining capitalism with "reforms") involves changing the property basis of society, it can be achieved only through a Socialist majority gaining control of the machinery of government for that purpose. Our correspondent is referred to our Declaration of Principles on another page.

We are not told how "evolution" is supposed to do the job, and incidentally this shows that Mr. MacConnel's belief that he is Mr. Warr's interpreter is quite wrong, for Mr. Warr did not put the case that Socialism could be achieved by reforms (or evolution).

Mr. MacConnel is angry about our alleged abuse of the word principles, but gives no example, so we do not know what he has in mind.

He says that "ownership and morals cannot co-exist," which is, of course, absurd. Capitalist morality co-exists with capitalist ownership. And apparently Mr. MacConnel does not really believe what he says, for he wants the morals of present-day society to be changed. Capitalist society cannot have its morality changed if it has none.

We give no evidence that we recognise that what is wrong with society is its morals, because the statement is meaningless. It is like saying that what is wrong with

CORRESPONDENCE

(Views put in letters in the correspondence column do not necessarily represent the Party's attitude).

RELIGION AND SOCIALISM.

If the existence of religion is not enough proof for God's existence, does Mr. Jarvis hope to find any more powerful evidence than this? If so, I would like to hear it. Mr. Jarvis's own proposition, that religion could not exist without a belief in God proves this right up to the hilt. For the logic of this proposition could only mean that a belief in God determines the existence of God and religion, for without this belief neither God nor religion would exist. Now when Mr. Jarvis asked his religious opponent for further proof of God's existence, than his own boomerang proposition, I claimed he was talking in riddles. And now he asks me: "What's wrong with this?" I answer: "The logic of your own proposition." It is true that the belief in Socialism does not prove that Socialism exists, but who said it did? Socialist Parties could exist knowing full well that a Socialist society did not exist, but a God-religion could not exist while knowing full well that God did not exist. Therefore, from this it would be true to say that the Socialist believes in a society that does not exist, while the religious man, on the contrary (if belonging to the Christian or Islam religion), must believe in a God who does exist. Socialists believe that man must go through a purgatory of historical periods before he can finally reach his salvation, while the religious man believes that men could be saved in any historical period, if they carry out the will of God.

R. SMITH.

It is a sheer waste of time to discuss religion, as there are so many facets to the subject. One man says that Jesus was a poor man and condemned the rich, but the churches seem to have made a good business out of it, especially in our own time, when it is investing its assets in stocks and shares on the Stock Exchange.

I would like to know what is the value of his religious experience to us. As far as I can ascertain it consists of a confusion of ideas, much of which is illusion and wish fulfilment. Millions of people have such delusions, he says, and that may well be the case.

Surely our task is not to concentrate on dispelling illusions, but in spreading a knowledge of Socialism, for light dispels darkness, and both ignorance and illusions will fade away when enlightenment is achieved. How many people now believe that the world was created four thousand years ago, or that it is flat, and down below there is hell and up in the sky, somewhere, there is a heaven. Very few now, so why worry about illusions. Spread Socialism.

I. FLOWER.

war is the violent way it is conducted.

Our correspondent lays down his one and only commandment: "Thou shalt not be selfish," but does not notice that in a class society it is two-edged. Does it mean that the exploiting class should show their unselfishness by giving up the exploitation of the working class? Or does it mean (as in the view of the exploiting class) that the workers should give up struggling against being exploited?

ED. COMM.

Battersea.

In his letter answering John Wyatt and R. Smith on "Socialism versus Religion," H. Jarvis makes a number of telling points, but his reference to "... the pacifism of the New Testament" needs some elaboration.

True, Socialists are not pacifists; that is they do not "turn the other cheek" when the employer attempts a wage reduction, neither do they tell workers to "resist not evil." But Socialists are opposed to war and violence—all wars! But what of the alleged "pacifism" of the New Testament?

Much is made by Christian pacifists of the alleged sayings of Jesus concerning the love of enemies and the blessing of peacemakers, but little or nothing is said about those sayings attributed to Jesus which are the complete opposite of these sayings, such as:

"But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." (Luke xix, 27.)

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (Matt. x, 34.)

"Suppose ye that I come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." (Luke xii, 51.)

"And he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy." (Luke xxii, 36.)

And was there not war in heaven, when "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon." (Revelation, xii, 7). And have not the Christians been fighting each other, and supporting their masters' wars ever since?

So much for Christian pacifism!

Yours fraternally,

"PEN."

Harbord, N.S.W., Australia.

The Editor.

Dear Sir,—Being a subscriber to SOCIALIST STANDARD, I must comment on articles in the June 1957 issue on pages 86-7.

I am a Catholic and have long been a believer in Socialism. I will remain both, despite Comrade Jarvis and others of his ilk who will confuse religious with economic and political problems.

Established Socialism would, I believe, constitute that Kingdom He spoke of and showed us how to achieve. The lessons of His crucifixion and "popping back to life again" need not be gone into here.

To say He is admired as a "great man" is so much bull-dust. In the eyes of the world He was a weakling as a man. As St. Paul puts it: "The weakness of man is the strength of God." He condemned the "great man" idea as much as you. Such "great man" egotism as Comrade Jarvis showed in trying to make an enemy of a friendly Mr. Barr, was absent from His character. He

was a friend to all and loved all, even His murderers. A lesson to be learned and an example to be followed by Socialists, Catholics, and all who hope for a better way of life.

The greatest, in my opinion, of the Holy Fathers, who, incidentally, was a father and never denied it, speaks of the ideal of owning all things in common and explains why it cannot be as yet. Namely, St. Augustine in "City of God."

Finally, please convey comradely greetings to Comrade Jarvis, who, despite his total ignorance of Christianity and its message, is no doubt a good and honest worker for the common cause of humanity, albeit in vain.

Yours sincerely,

C. W. REILLY.

S.E.3.

Dear Sir,—I don't know where your correspondent, Henry Myers, gets his information from, but the plain records of the Gospels state that Christ was hounded to death by the chief priests and scribes of that time. (Mark, 14-1). They paid Judas, a disciple of Christ, to betray him, and he was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Being occupied by the Romans, the scribes and chief priests had to hand Christ over to the occupying power.

But the Roman Governors, Herod and Pilate, both saw that they were dealing with an innocent man and attempted to free him. The people, however, whipped into a frenzy by the church authorities, declared that Christ was not the long expected Messiah, and clamoured for his death. Can any story be plainer?

As for Mr. Myers' contention that Christ's last words: "Why hast Thou forsaken me?" are blasphemous, is just plain silly—besides being in bad taste, as these were the words of a dying man.

By the way, if Mr. Myers will consult a dictionary (as well as the New Testament), he will find that the word "ambiguous" means having two meanings—not necessarily untruthful.

Yours truly,

GEOFFREY SHARPE.

P.S.—May I add a word in favour of your correspondent, Mr. John Wyatt, who stated that the New Testament could be found to support a better economic system than our present one?

OTHER LETTERS.

Letters are in hand from C. Luff, Canada; R. L. Rhodes, Trowbridge; and D. Anderson, Glasgow.

ED. COMM.

MERDEKA IN MALAYA

ON August 31st Malaya attained Merdeka (independence), after over a century of British colonial rule.

The day is a memorable one for the people there, who celebrated amid scenes of wild rejoicing and shouts of "Merdeka." In the capital, on the stroke of midnight, the new Prime Minister told the people:—

"A new star rises in the eastern sky—a star of freedom for yet another Asian people. This is the greatest moment in the life of the Malayan people, for a new nation is born—a nation that will stand forth free and independent."

Incidentally, this little speech recalls our article in last December's issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD entitled *Happenings in Hungary*, where it was pointed out that the battle cry of "Freedom" was used to rally support to a budding capitalist class trying to seize power in Hungary. The last sentence in that article will probably prove as relevant to Malaya as to Hungary: "In other countries whenever the new ruling group is firmly in the saddle of government they lose no time in turning on the workers."

Miss Nancy Simmons, a Colonial Office chauffeur, was also present. She had been invited as a representative of the British working-class by the Malayan Prime Minister. This point illustrates the usual procedure of the rising ruling-class when taking over governmental power, of attempting to give their cause a working-class flavour.

What Malaya is worth

The transfer of power has taken place with the blessing and co-operation of the British Government, who had despatched the Duke of Gloucester there to represent the Crown, and, as part of the ceremony, hand over the instrument of transfer. A glance at recent events may indicate the reason for this support, which, at first sight, might seem against their interests.

Foreign investment (mostly British) in Malaya was

nearly £100 million in 1937, chiefly invested in rubber plantations and tin mines. Imports into Malaya amounted to £484.5 million in 1956, of which U.K. was one of the largest suppliers.

But for several years past profits have been reduced by internal strife—Chinese "communists" attempting to gain power by force. The Chinese population is important, being as numerous as the Malays. These Chinese miners and agricultural workers find that developing capitalism is no panacea for their problems, and so they give their support to the Communist Party under the mistaken impression that their policy will radically alter society. This Party is influenced to an extent by the regime in China, to whom it looks for moral support. British interests in Malaya, seeing that there is a real threat to their investments, called in the British Army. Many members of the British working-class have already lost their limbs, their health and some their lives, fighting for their masters' interests in the steaming jungles of Malaya.

Besides the antagonism that all this may arouse in Britain how much better to let the native rulers take over the thankless task of trying to make exploitation popular in Malaya. Merdeka in Malaya is the answer.

Trade Union Movement

The beginnings of a working-class (in the present-day meaning of the term) occurred with the rapid development of that country at the turn of the century when rubber and tin became useful to industry and the development of the steamship and the Suez Canal made bulk cargoes from the East a proposition for industrial Europe. Tamil workers were imported into Malaya from India to work on the rubber plantations. There are 400,000 such workers now employed. Chinese were imported for the tin mines. As an indication of the growing trade union

movement, in 1947 696,036 days were lost in strikes on rubber plantations. In Singapore in 1945 173,000 workers came out in a general strike.

In the first elections held in 1955 the union of the various nationalistic political parties won 51 of the 52 seats. The only opposition seat was won by the Islamic party. Many of the workers in Malaya believed that their troubles were due to the country being ruled by foreigners and, therefore, they supported their native capitalist class. Presumably these workers will find out that a change of administrative personnel will not alter their class position.

Women and Merdeka

One feature in the capitalist development in Malaya is the lack of status of the Malay woman, despite her influence in favour of Merdeka. At the elections the newspapers expressed astonishment at the voters. Some of them had trudged miles carrying babies to get to the booths. By tradition, Malays are allowed to divorce their wives with only three months' sustenance as alimony, and it is estimated that 60 per cent. of Malay marriages end in divorce. As a result of all this there is widespread prostitution. Very little other employment is open to women, and destitution is the only alternative.

One thing of which we can be confident is that a modern capitalist welfare state will not stand for the expense of directly keeping large numbers of unproductive discarded women and their children. For the women of Malaya capitalism will no doubt in due course bring them an up-to-date capitalist marriage system. It is a useful spur to productivity for a worker to be burdened with the

worry of providing for a wife and family. But it will be economic causes, the need for a larger labour supply educated to some degree, that will change the way of life and their bondage for many of Malay women. The "independence" of their country will play but a little part.

What are the prospects?

Malaya is a heaven for big business. The two chief industries, rubber and tin, require vast capital outlay for efficient exploitation. The price of labour is comparatively low, but the demand for these raw materials is tremendous and constantly expanding. What more can a capitalist wish for—low wages and an expanding market. Furthermore, the development plan for the period 1956-60 envisages a capital expenditure of over £1,000 million. Merdeka will, they hope, mean a rich harvest to the foreign capitalists (who own much of the wealth of Malaya) without the headache of repressing a working-class continually growing more aggressive.

The following tip (straight from the horse's mouth) sums up the position for the capitalist in Malaya, and, incidentally, for the worker too. This is an advert. by the Malayan Government in *Eastern World* (August 1957): "INVEST IN MALAYA, THE LAND OF GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY. BIGGEST RETURNS ON INVESTMENT, LOWEST TAX ON PROFITS. SECURITY ASSURED BY STABLE GOVERNMENT." But riches at one end of the scale presupposes poverty at the other, and it will be poverty that will continue to be the lot of the workers in their promised land of Merdeka in Malaya. F. OFFORD.

THE BIG CROCODILES OF FLEET STREET

AS Socialists, we do, of course, expect the Capitalist Press on both sides of the Iron Curtain to be two-faced. The fact that the Press, along with the other media of mass head-fixing, has to present Capitalism to the workers in palatable form, makes hypocrisy unavoidable. Amongst the most glaring examples of recent hypocrisy is the dual attitude on strikes.

When a strike occurs in this country, the Capitalist Press, with the exception of the *Daily Worker*, is agreed that the time's not right, the "country" can't afford wage increases just now, arbitration is best, or the grievance is not a genuine one. The Red Bogey is often used amongst other cheap tricks to poison public opinion. "The Reds are stirring up trouble again—but for these Moscow agents, things would be all right." That's how the theme goes. The *Daily Worker* loves to play the role of workers' champion and, to those with short memories, about its opposition to past strikes, it goes down well. Who would suspect that the *Daily Worker* might have a motive other than the successful organisation of workers for wages and conditions?

The ironic thing about Capitalism, however, is that it laughs at them all in the end. What happens when there is a strike behind the iron curtain? Wages and conditions are still the issues, but the *Daily Worker* and the rest of the Capitalist Press change over. The strikers suddenly become "heroic freedom fighters" to the pro-British Press, and to the pro-Russian they are "Fascist Agents." At first sight this may seem very bewildering, but really it is simply that policy is dictated not by workers' interests on either side, but the nation of prefer-

ence to those concerned. If they favour British Capitalism, strikes in Britain are bad, but strikes in Russian colonies are good. If they favour Russian Capitalism, the position is reversed. Perhaps the greatest ally the propaganda agents of the Capitalist class have is the short memories of most workers. The events in Hungary in the latter part of last year caused a momentary wave of excitement, but the so-called Communist Party, with its anti-working-class poison, is still here. If they shout "Down with the Tories" loud enough and often enough, they hope people will believe that there is actually someone blacker than they are, then Hungary and the general set-up in Russia can be conveniently forgotten.

How long the "plain sailing" between the Moscow earthquakes will last each time they do not know. They only have to print what *Pravda* says about Molotov and Malenkov and wait for the next lot. Recently there was the strike at Lodz in Poland (caused by some Fascist agents left over from Poznan no doubt).

The *Daily Express* (14/8/57) traced the trouble in Poland to "trying to build Socialism on a shoe string budget and keeping as far as possible from entanglements with Russia." It is doubtlessly true that Gomulka and the present gang at the top in Poland would rather not tangle with the military might behind the Russian ruling class, but surely the *Express* knows that Socialism is not involved. Budgets, shoe string or otherwise, are obviously part of the buying and selling basis of Capitalism. Workers are always poor whatever the State budget might be. They are poor because the places they work in are not theirs, and, working for wages, they only get

back part of what they produce; the boss who pockets the rest always wants them to work harder for less. As much as the Press might try to ignore it, the class struggle between those who produce but do not possess and those who possess but do not produce is always with us, and the State running of industry alters nothing. State running of industry has nothing whatever to do with Socialism, which is a fundamentally different system. Socialism means the end of a class of wage earners, and a class of interest and profit and rent receivers. It means the end of buying and selling completely. Obviously under Socialism, where the means of production are held in common, the fruits of mankind's co-operative labours will be freely available.

The *Daily Express* for the same date continued as follows: "But the Poles, a proud people, are tired of hunger. They are just as tired of high prices—of working for a week to buy a shirt, and two and a half months to earn the price of a suit." Now there is a fine piece of rousing warm-heartedness for you, how different from what the *Express* was saying a couple of weeks before about the Midland Transport strikers. Perhaps under Polish Capitalism the "benefits" of hire purchase and "pay as you wear" have yet to make their appearance.

Now remember the point made at the beginning of this article, remember also the familiar excuses as to why workers here should not have wage increases, then read

what the *Daily Worker* says about Lodz. Before we quote it, let us point out again, this time they don't quote *Pravda*, but quote the Polish paper *Trybuna Ludu*. They have a *Daily Worker* reporter in Warsaw, and yet the report of just over two dozen lines was mostly quotes (15/8/57). (That's one way of getting the line right). Having announced the end of the strike, they go on: *Trybuna Ludu*, reporting the return to work, said: "The Lodz tram workers, recognising the unfairness of the added that the Lodz tramworkers let themselves be influenced by irresponsible elements and had put forward strike action, resolved to return to work." The editorial unreal demands.

A Government communique on August 10th announced a wage increase for the tramworkers which was "the limit of the possibilities of our economy." The Polish trade union paper *The Voice of Labour* said that the rise asked for by the tramworkers "is due to them as well as to other sections of the working class. But the Government is today unable to pay a wage increase such as all of us would like to have. Neither," it added, "should the Government act in such a way as to cause inflation."

Please don't tell us you have heard it all before, we know you have, and while the wage slaves on both sides of the iron curtain see no alternative to Capitalism, we are sorry, but it will be more of the same. H. B.

IRISH ODDS AND ENDS

Writing in the *Dublin Evening Press* (19/8/57), Fr. Robert Nash, S.J., says that somebody showed him a leaflet recommending Catholics to pray for the Communists; the idea being that each Catholic should "adopt" a special Communist in order to convert him to the faith. He continues: "Who he or she is will be known to God. For this precise person we are invited to pray much, to do penance, to commend him or her constantly to Our Lady."

Many prominent Communists, like Douglas Hyde, he continues, have found their way into the Church; but for those converted, millions are still "blinded and hardened, goaded to an insane hatred of God and His Church." But, says Fr. Nash, "Suppose you entered into a pact with Our Lord to devote your life to the conversion of one of these?"

Yes, suppose every Communist was converted to the Catholic Church. What good would that do for humanity? How would it, for example, solve the terrible poverty of thousands of Irish workers? (As we see it, it would only mean that the Communists were exchanging one set of wrong ideas and attitudes for another lot—those of the Catholic Church, an organisation equally dictatorial intolerant and dogmatic as the Communist Party.

The solution to the problems facing working people, in Ireland as elsewhere in this life—the only one we Socialists know of—will not be solved by joining or putting faith in either the Communist Party or the Catholic Church. Neither warrants working-class support.

Nationalised Industries compete in England

Nationalised concerns, like private ones, are run to

make a profit—and to make as large a one as possible, even if this means one State concern having to wage war on another. And this is now happening in England.

Under the heading: "Shock for the British Post Office," an *Irish Independent* (20/8/57) editorial comments:—

"A novel revolt against the Post Office has broken out amongst the nationalised industries in Britain. Two of the regional electricity boards have decided that the cost, under the new increased postal rates, of sending out bills to customers would be so high that the bills will be delivered by the board's own employees. The campaign is still in the experimental stage; but there is no doubt that it can effect substantial economies. The North Western Electricity Board will save £10,000 a year by having 250,000 quarterly bills delivered by the meter-readers. One can only guess at what the London Electricity Board, which has begun to deliver accounts by hand to 1,300,000 customers, will save."

And later in the editorial the writer says:—

"Trade Unions will be quick to realise that their members (in Eire) would be the first to suffer if a campaign of the kind in Britain were to spread to this country."

For our part, we hope that English meter-readers in the British Electrical Trades Union will have something to say about this move by the Electricity Board to save money by making them more work.

It is about time that workers everywhere—in Britain, Ireland, Russia and elsewhere—realised that Nationalisation is no use to them, whether they work for the nationalised concerns or not.

Economic decline in Eire

According to the Irish Statistical Survey for 1956, issued by the Central Statistics Office on August 21, 1957, and published in *The Irish Press*, there was a decline in the national income last year. The drop was three per

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THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

HUNGARY AND SELF-DETERMINATION

THE member-states of the United Nations are pledged to uphold "the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples," but at the same time the U.N. Charter forbids intervention "in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State." So all that any government needs to do when flouting the first clause is to appeal to the second, by claiming that their action is a domestic matter, or that what they are doing is by invitation of the "legitimate" government. Thus, the British Government in Cyprus, the Indian Government in Kashmir, and the Russian Government in Hungary.

The charges against the Russian Government at U.N. Assembly in September 1957 were levelled to the accompaniment of much indignation and speechmaking, but the matter ended "with nothing more forceful than another appeal to the Soviet Union to withdraw her troops and relax the grip of her puppet regime." (*Manchester Guardian*, 11th Sept., 1957). It was a foregone conclusion, for no government is at present willing to make war on Russia over Hungary, though the excuse will be stored away to be brought out again if occasion demands.

Louis Kossuth, 1848

It has all happened before, in 1848. Hungarian Liberals and Nationalists revolted to secure independence from Austria, and after initial successes, were crushed with the help of troops sent in by Russia. Then, as now, there was much talk about the so-called right of self-determination, and later on, when the Hungarian leader, Louis Kossuth, as a refugee, visited America, he was given a great welcome by, among others, the American lawyer who later became Republican President—Abraham

Lincoln. In the early stages while fighting was still going on in Hungary, the following resolution was drafted by a small committee, with Lincoln as chairman, and passed at a meeting in Springfield, Illinois, on September 12, 1849. (Reproduced from an article on Hungarian parallels between 1849 and 1957, in *Saturday Review*, New York, 16th Feb., 1957):

"That in their present glorious struggle for liberty, the Hungarians command our highest admiration and have our warmest sympathy; that they have our prayers for their speedy triumph and final success; that the government of the United States should acknowledge the independence of Hungary as a nation of free men at the very earliest moment consistent with our amicable relations with the government against which they are contending; that, in the opinion of this meeting, the immediate acknowledgment of the independence of Hungary by our government is due from American free men to their struggling brethren, to the general cause of republican liberty, and not violative of the just rights of any nation or people."

The resolution, like the resolutions of U.N. assemblies today, was merely an expression of sympathy; the only positive action it asked for was the recognition of Hungary as an independent State, subject, however, to not offending Austria, "the government against which" the Hungarians were rebelling.

A Lawyer's Definition

In January 1852, when the fight was over and the Austrian Government was in control again, Kossuth toured America, and another meeting was held at Springfield, Illinois, addressed by Lincoln. The long resolution showed Lincoln's thoroughness in his attempt to define in legally precise language what he called the right of national independence. The opening clause read: "That it is the right of any people, sufficiently numerous for national independence, to throw off, to revolutionize, their existing form of government, and to establish such other in its stead as they may choose." This was the most forthright part of the resolution and, as we shall see, it was the part Lincoln was to throw overboard 10 years later.

In the other paragraphs of the resolution Lincoln declared that if such a movement for independence takes place, no other government has the right to intervene either to help or to hinder the struggle, and that the intervention of Russia in Hungary against Kossuth was, therefore, "illegal and unwarrantable," but as it had taken place, it would have been legitimate and meritorious for America or any other government to have resisted Russian intervention in Hungary. At this point the resolution cautiously lapsed into the non-committal:—

"That whether we will, in fact, interfere in such a case, is purely a question of policy, to be decided when the exigencies arise."

Circumstances alter cases

As often happens, the leader of the Opposition, when he gets into power, can hardly recognise the things he has been saying. In 1861 Abraham Lincoln became President and then refused to acknowledge the right of the Southern States to secede (notwithstanding clause one of his 1852 resolution on Hungary). He waged the bloodiest war of a 100 years to prevent secession. Lincoln did not pretend, as his admirers sometimes pretend, that the war was being fought to destroy slavery. He saw, however, that in the world as it really is admission of the right of any American State to go its own way would have reduced powerful united America to a disunited

medley of small and weak States. This is true of the world today, and will remain true so long as capitalism is allowed to continue. Capitalist trade and the maintenance of private property demand central government with powerful military forces and defensible frontiers, and against this the so-called "natural right" and "international principle" of self-determination are merely fanciful; along with U.N. protests, they have no deterrent effect on the governments of the world. The nationalist movements organized to gain independence are not striving for any abstract principle, but for the power of a propertied class to operate capitalism within territory under

IRISH ODDS AND ENDS—continued from page 151

cent. on the 1955 figure.

The total national income in 1955 was £462 million—last year it was £449 million. Profits from agriculture, forestry and fishing fell by £11½ million in 1956; other domestic profits declined by £2½ million. Industry's percentage of the national income, at 25.2 per cent., showed little change since 1954.

Personal expenditure on consumer goods and services dropped 3 per cent. on the 1955 figure. During the year the number of cattle on the farms dropped by 1.2 per cent.; poultry by 3.2 per cent.; sheep increased by 3 per cent., and pigs by 10.3 per cent. But industrial production declined during the year by 4 per cent.—this decline in industrial production was most pronounced in construction and repair of vehicles, in distilling, boat building and repairing, furniture, sugar and mineral waters.

The Survey states that the total labour force was down by 13,000. The direct drop in the numbers working was 19,000, with an increase of 6,000 unemployed. The decline was made up of 10,000 in agriculture, 4,000 in the manufacturing industries, and 4,000 in construction. Compared with 1951 the total at work is down by 59,000. Of course, many of these workers are now abroad, in England and elsewhere; but the annual percentage unemployed was 7.7 last year compared to 6.8 per cent. in 1955.

From this statistical survey it can be seen that the Irish economy, which is predominantly agricultural, is a capitalist one, and is not in very good shape. Life for the Irish worker, whether he works in industry or on the land, is indeed an insecure one.

Sinn Fein policy is futile

Speaking against the internment and the "jailing of

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, October 1907).

Socialism or Reform?

To put . . . a long list of "palliatives" before the workers not only excites derision and scatters the workers' energies, but leaves the cause of evil unchecked, confines the workers' attention to fruitless efforts at reform within the present system, serves capitalist interests and starves and hinders the only forward movement, thus postponing indefinitely both the removal of the cause and

their own control. High-flown talk about "principles of self-determination" may be an incidental aid in the struggle, but has no bearing on the conduct of affairs once independence has been won. There is, therefore, no real inconsistency in the action of one group achieving independence and then forcibly suppressing movement for independence on the part of another minority within the country. Britain, America, India, Pakistan, Ghana, Russia, and all the other national capitalist groups which preach "self-determination" and flout it whenever important economic or strategic interests are involved, are all being true to the vital belief they have in common, belief in the necessities of capitalism.

Irishmen" by the authorities at Curragh, Mr. Seamus South "appealed to the people to join Sinn Fein, which, he said, was a lawfully constituted organisation . . . Their aim was the re-unification of Ireland as a thirty-two county republic and the re-establishment of an All-Ireland Parliament. They had been accused of wanting to create a civil war, but they did not want that." (Mr. South was speaking at a Sinn Fein meeting at Listowel, and was reported in *The Kerryman* (24/8/57).

Whether Sinn Fein achieved their aim of re-uniting Ireland and re-establishing an All-Ireland Parliament, they would not solve the problems facing the Irish people—the problems of poverty and general insecurity.

The mass of the people suffer from these problems because they own little or no property in the means of life. They are either propertyless industrial or farm workers—when they are not unemployed—or their farms are too small to enable them to make sufficient money to live a comfortable life.*

Only when Irish workers and poverty-stricken small farmers unite together to make the land and the other means of life the common property of all, together with the workers of other lands, will they be able to solve their problems. Emigration is not the solution—only Socialism is!

* Sixty per cent. of the farms are under thirty acres; and the recent survey, carried out by the Central Statistics Office, showed that the income level on the majority of these farms was too low to create incentives for young folk to stay on the land.

"This factor is the main cause of our rural exodus." —*The Sunday Press*, 25/8/57. Emphasis theirs.

PETER E. NEWELL.

Co. Kerry, Eire.

the healing of the wounds.

Any genuine reform that takes a bite out of capitalist interests (and no reform can be genuine that does not) can only be obtained in opposition to the capitalist class by the workers capturing political power. Thus, to obtain even reforms would require what is essentially a revolution. But the working class cannot be united upon a measure that can only doubtfully benefit a small number of them; while the number of evil effects of capitalism is so vast that scarcely any two workers can be united upon all the innumerable palliatives called for, and as to which are the most pressing.

By having their attention directed to effects only the

efforts of the workers are made mutually antagonistic, and are scattered and nullified by being directed to all points of the compass upon the myriad effects of capitalism, instead of being focussed on the cause.

Finally, even regarding such inadequate and restricted measures of alleviation that may be possible within the capitalist system, and even supposing the ruling class

could be induced to grant them, we direct attention to the following incontrovertible proposition: That the only effective way to induce the ruling class to attempt to palliate the evils of their system is to organise the workers for the overthrow of that system.

(Extracts from an article "Socialism and Reform").

THE PHONEY REVOLUTION

Part One: The Burnham Thesis

THE roots of James Burnham's Managerial Revolution go back to the early 19th century utopian Socialist, St. Simon, who first systematised the notion of the managerial society. Burnham's second edition of this concept was neither analytical nor in the strict sense statistical, only crudely and melodramatically descriptive. Nevertheless, it met a need in that it gave food for thought to a theory hungry intelligentsia and presented them with a plausible view of what was supposedly happening in contemporary society.

Burnham and the Reformists

Not that the motley crowd of reformists who acclaimed the managerial revolution were prepared to swallow Burnham whole. They eschewed his cynicism as to the effectiveness of any kind of political action; his blatant totalitarianism and bizarre fatalism based on "iron historic laws." Nor did they share his brutal frankness that this managerial revolution would only be for the working class a change of masters—managers instead of capitalists, and, vide Burnham, a change in some respects for the worse. Rather they diluted the doctrine with democratic and quasi idealistic assumptions. They agreed that a hierarchic social structure was inevitable, even desirable, with an administrative and technical elite at the apex. Political expediency, however, compelled them to a tender regard for the broad based "masses," who would be comfortably supported in that station of life to which it pleased "management" to call them. Indeed, leftists in their quest for novelty renamed the managerial revolution 20th century Socialism, and in their incorrigible fashion turned Burnham's nightmare into a Fabian day dream.

Burnham's proposition

Burnham's book was tricked out in the pseudo Marxist terminology favoured by Trotskyists and Communists alike. Perhaps many mistook his heavy style for weight of argument, and his metaphysical determinism for scientific exposition. Again, the fact that Burnham as an ex-Trotskyist had been subject to the political paranoia peculiar to the creed, made it easy for him to pass over to the grandiose assumptions of the managerial revolution.

These assumptions can be briefly summarised. It is a fallacy, said Burnham, to believe that Socialism is the only alternative to capitalism. In fact, he contended that the abolition of capitalist property relations holds no implications for the realisation of Socialism. Nevertheless, the present system was doomed. It had lost its power due to the impact of economic crises, modern wars and changing industrial techniques on an already enfeebled system. The New Deal in U.S.A., large scale State

organisation carried out by the Soviet and Nazi dictatorships, even the effects of the war economy on Britain, had compelled the major Powers along a path which so far as the old methods of capitalist production were concerned there could be no return. So argued Burnham.

Burnham's Managerial Class

According to Burnham, capitalism in any significant sense was virtually finished, and the phase we are entering, contrary to Marxist predictions, is not Socialism, but the managerial society, a social set up where control is vested in the administration of business and government by an elite of highly trained and educated men. In short, a society dominated by the manager and technician. Economic evolution, he argued, compels the State to exercise ever greater control and even direction over the means of production. But he concluded, whether managers are representatives of private or public concerns, their power will grow with the growth of economic and technical development. Thus, the managers will emerge as a distinct class, with their own class consciousness, class interests and privileges.

Managerial Society Universal but not Indivisible

Paralleled with this internal development of managerial society, there will externally be a struggle between the three major states or super-states for world supremacy. These super-states will consist of Europe, pivoted on Germany; Asia, whose focal point will be Japan; and America, based on the U.S.A. Each of these states will be autonomous managerial societies based on state ownership of the means of production and political control by the managerial class. We may mention that Burnham wrote his book in 1940 and at the time deemed a Nazi victory possible.

The Three Phases of the Revolution

The managerial revolution, vide Burnham, will be divided into three phases, although the phases may overlap. First, the managers will seize political power from the capitalist class and reduce them to impotence. Secondly, the curbing of the masses and their indoctrination with managerial ideologies. Thirdly, the struggle between the world Powers for economic supremacy. In Burnham's view the process took the classic course in Russia. In Germany the working class was curbed first and the capitalists later. Leaving aside the fact that all of Burnham's major prophecies regarding the outcome of the war were false, what he had to prove was that Russia, via the Bolsheviks, and Germany, via the Nazis, had eliminated capitalism. Further, that the New Deal had been a mortal blow to U.S.A. capitalism and that in the major capitalist countries control of the means of production were passing under the control of the

managers. It can be said that Burnham's premises have no more foundation now than when he first put them forward.

Burnham's Fallacies

When Burnham argued that the managerial revolution occurred first in Russia, this would seem inconsistent with his own logic. According to him the managerial revolution can only take place as the result of an economic and technical development which renders the capitalist organisation of production superfluous along with the capitalist class. No such process, however, had taken place in Russia. The task of the Bolsheviks was not to supersede capitalism in Russia, but to develop it. Burnham strove to show that Soviet Russia was neither capitalist nor Socialist, but he evaded the basic proposition that the relations between wage workers and a state employer enchain the working class in Russia to the laws of wage labour as elsewhere in capitalism.

Nor was he on any stronger ground when he argued that the Nazi Germany had begun a new social order. He offered as a proof of this the fact that mass unemployment had been wiped out in Germany. Remembering the vast armament programme of the Nazis and the placing of the economy on a virtual war footing, it would have been strange if the Nazis had not done so.

Burnham tried to clinch his point by saying that capitalist countries like England could not even in total war abolish mass unemployment. Once, however, the war effort was under way mass unemployment was abolished here. He also contrasted what he believed to be the overall efficiency of the alleged managerial set up in Germany with what he termed backward nations like England. Yet, according to official English sources, war production efficiency was superior to that which obtained in Nazi Germany.

Nor did his picture of a virtually non-capitalist economy correspond with the facts. German capitalism all through the Nazi regime and right up to now exhibits the monopolistic and interlocking character which it had in pre-Nazi times. One has only to think of the iron and steel industry dominated by men like Wolf and Flick, Transport, the building, chemical and electrical trades, largely controlled by the Quandt family, or the monopolistic concentration of potash, oil, textiles, glass and cement. While names like Krupp and Klockner were still in Nazi Germany household words. Not only were these monopolists powerful capitalists, but also active participants in their businesses. As such they do not fall into the category of mere coupon clippers or managers in Burnham's sense of the term. Moreover, these powerful capitalists or groups of capitalists were able, by the familiar devices of inter-connected directorships, plural and proxy voting, share exchanges, profit pooling, etc., to exercise a closer control over the German economy than their counterparts here.

State Regulation and Capitalism

But, argued Burnham, was there not a great deal of regulation and direction of the state, including curtailment of investment, carried out in Nazi Germany. But if this is the characteristic mark of the managerial set up, then English capitalism was equally qualified to be accounted a managerial society. A qualification which in England's case Burnham would not grant. Burnham contrived to

show that market laws and the profit motive were no longer crucial to the German economy. While it was true that the outcome of imperialist rivalries and the needs of German rearmament had blocked certain economic avenues, this had only led to a more intense search for new outlets by means of an aggressive policy of expansion. Thus, extension of markets, export of capital and expansion of capital accumulation were the dominant features of Nazi Germany, just as they were the dominant features of pre-Nazi Germany, and just as they are dominant features today. (Here, of course, we specify West Germany.)

Again, vide Burnham, the index to the advance of managerial society lies in the extent to which state capital replaces private capital. But here once again the evidence which Burnham offered is unconvincing and even paradoxical. In Germany in 1937 the capital invested in state enterprise was only about 7 per cent. of the nominal capital of joint stock undertakings. But if, according to Burnham's logic, the maturity of the managerial society is an ever-increasing ratio in favour of public financing of industry as against the private industrial sector, then Germany was, under Hitler, still overwhelmingly a capitalist nation.

We might also remember that in 1938 and, taking account of the different price levels, profits distributed in Germany were 1,200 million marks, and undistributed profits were over 2,000 million marks. According to the Oxford Institute of Statistics (The Economics of Full Employment), "Profit margins were extraordinarily high in Germany in 1938 as compared with other countries or with conditions prevailing in Germany in the '20s." Also the same source states that between 1933-1938 there was a decline in Germany in real wages. Nor did German capitalism remain a static economy. Some concerns expanded, others declined. Some made huge profits, others made small profits. Some even went out of existence. In short, under the Nazis the economic set up had all the basic features associated with the economic behaviour of capitalism. As such it hardly corresponded with Burnham's picture of a non-capitalist, non-profit economy.

State Intervention and Capitalism

Burnham also advanced as a crucial proposition in support of his managerial thesis that state intervention, he instanced the New Deal, undermines the basis of capitalist society. In principle Burnham had to argue that state intervention is a move away from capitalism to the managerial society. But state intervention is a typical feature of capitalism, and its purpose is to, and does in fact, strengthen the structure of the capitalist economy. While groups of capitalists in America opposed state intervention via the New Deal, the undoubted intention of Roosevelt was to strengthen and stabilise capitalist property relations, and in this he succeeded. The fact that state intervention of some sort has been a consistent and permanent feature of capitalism, including the state regulation and interference of its mercantilist period, exposes the poverty of Burnham's argument.

Burnham and H.S.A. Capitalism

It was American capitalism which Burnham made the touchstone of his contentions. For this he leaned heavily on Berle and Means study, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*. They stated that "The dominant institutional feature extant in America is the large corporation.

Typically they said this is controlled by its management, who have no substantial ownership interest in it and consequently receive no benefit from it apart from their salaries." They add that in 1929 65 per cent. of the 200 largest corporations, totalling 80 per cent. of their assets, were management controlled. Burnham, however, went far beyond the findings of Berle and Mean. Indeed, only a total misreading of their work could lead one to conclude that they were advancing a theory of the managerial revolution. Apart from what they termed pure management; i.e., Burnham's definition of the managerial class, they included in management those whose interest was financial and profit making.

Since the publication of Berle and Mean's book, The Securities and Exchange Commission of the Temporary Economic Committee (T.N.E.C.) carried out an exhaustive analysis on the same lines, which emphasised an aspect of corporation control ignored by Burnham. The report stated that "In about 140 of the 200 largest corporations the blocks of shares in the hands of one interest group were large enough to justify with other indications, such as representation on management, the classification of these concerns as more or less ownership controlled." This, of course, is even truer for the vast number of smaller companies. The same report stated that the 2,500 officers and directors of the 200 companies own more than two billion dollars' worth of stock, which amount is heavily concentrated in the hands of about 250 men. Again, it can be noted that the dominant group need hold as little as 20 per cent. of the total stock providing sufficient proxy votes can be arranged, and the rest of the stock can be sufficiently dispersed. It is true that the salaried employers of big corporations—managers in Burnham's sense—may by investing their savings or even judiciously speculating with the funds of the corporation

in which they are employed, strengthen their financial position and reach the status of capitalists. But it was no part of Burnham's case to prove that there can be and are changes in the personnel of the capitalist class.

What Burnham failed to prove

But even apart from the decisive controlling interests of the powerful capitalist groups who are outside Burnham's managerial classification, he failed to answer the crucial question, and that was in what way do the most important managers employed by capitalists have interests and aims different from their employers? Further, if the mode of production of the managerial society is to be neither capitalist or Socialist, in what way will it be different from both? Burnham himself was aware of the basic weakness of this part of his case, and although he strove to get round it, he left the whole matter up in the air. Thus we find in the end that Burnham's managerial society, with its integration of state with capitalist industry, is merely a new name for an old process, the development of monopoly capitalism.

We might conclude by saying that Burnham typifies the arrogant, peevish intellectual. He qualified to become a leading Trotskyist by making all the political errors it is possible to make. Some might have been dangerous—if anybody had taken any notice of him. Thus, in 1936, he was not only still asserting that the Soviet set up had a Socialist basis but further, that in the event of a war between Russia and other capitalist powers, the workers should turn their arms against their nationals in support of Russia. Now he has stopped being a Trotskyist, he has not, however, stopped being foolishly dangerous. He is now advocating American world domination—and at this point we leave him.

E. W.

TWO OF A KIND

MR. KRUSCHEV, in Prague in mid-July, made some sneering remarks about the British Labour leaders. A month earlier one of the Labour M.P.s, Mr. John Strachey, had been writing derisively about the Russian Communist leaders in the American *Saturday Review*. It appears that when a British Labour delegation passed through Moscow in 1954 one of the members, Mr. Sam Watson, had protested to Krushchev about the abuse the Russians directed against the British Labour leaders.

Krushchev recalled this in a speech he made in Prague on 11th July, 1957, and went on to say that he refused to withdraw:—

"I do not deny that I myself call you lackeys of capitalists. I consider that this is correct because you are not against capitalists." (*Daily Mail*, 12/7/1957.)

He added nastily (a little brazenly, in view of his own reputation for gutting and guzzling) that the visiting delegation "ate and drank a lot."

Across the Atlantic the *Saturday Review* (8/6/57) had published an article "Communism and Socialism," in which Mr. John Strachey, Labour M.P. for Dundee West, a former Minister of Food and Secretary of State for War, dealt with the present beliefs of the Communists and Labourites in comparison with what they used to believe.

This is what Mr. Strachey had to say about how the

Communist Party has betrayed Communism:—

"We ought, of course, at the same time to notice, that . . . the word Communism has been made to stand for something which is almost opposite to the original meaning of the word. The word Communism, traditionally, means a state of society in which the element of coercion has been eliminated instead of vastly increased. To Marx, as to Marx, it meant the vision of a society which was stateless as well as classless: in which all associations of citizens both for productive purposes and for all other purposes were purely voluntary, and in which equalitarianism had been taken to the point where the distribution of the national income could be based upon the principle of 'from each according to his abilities and to each according to his needs'."

Then Mr. Strachey told the readers of the *Saturday Review* what the British Labour Party now believes. It was a masterpiece of vagueness. The Labour Party, according to Mr. Strachey, seeks "the extension of the public ownership, in one form or another, to many large-scale industrial and productive enterprises within the community; but no one knows . . . how far it will prove useful and beneficial to push that process." There is to be change in the direction of moving nearer to equality of income, but "not, of course, equalization of earned income."

He excuses the vagueness by saying that "most democratic Socialists would, I think, attach less importance to particular objectives than to the principle of making the economy and the policy of their countries

conform to what turned out to be the real desires of the majority of the electorate . . ."

It is not at all easy to gather from Strachey what the British Labour Party actually does now stand for. One thing only is certain that nothing in his article could justify his claim that the Labour Party's aim is Socialism.

The Pot and the Kettle both justified

As Socialists ourselves we can heartily endorse the abuse Krushchev and Strachey level at their respective parties. Of course, Strachey and Co. are hacks for "managed capitalism," and, of course, Strachey is right when he says that what nowadays is popularly (and ignorantly) labelled Communism is the direct opposite of what Communism meant to Marx and still means to the S.P.G.B.

But what about Strachey's own betrayal? He himself once subscribed to the Marxist aim of a Communist system of society (as, long before, did Keir Hardie, one of the founders of the Labour Party). Strachey could, of

course, say that he has changed his mind, but at least he might be expected to give reasons why he supports Labour Party tinkering with capitalism and finds it more deserving of support than the movement to establish Socialism. And what has happened to the former fervid equalitarianism of Attlee and other Labour leaders?

And what about Krushchev? Why doesn't he include himself in the capitalist hacks? He and his clique who rule Russia are fond of abusing British Labour leaders, but it would seem to be from them that the Russians have learned their own political trickery. Starting off with the proclaimed intention of establishing Socialism (or Communism) they quickly borrowed the old double-talk of the British Labour Party and give the name Socialism to the Russian State capitalism. It is indeed a case of one group of apologists for capitalism quarrelling with another, and only the Socialist, looking on can see the real nature of the confidence trick both groups are playing on the working class.

H.

DOES IT MATTER WHAT YOU THINK?

THE last of the Film talks at Head Office in the early part of the year was entitled: "Does It Matter What You Think?"

The film was lively and interesting, for many reasons. It had been produced for the Army authorities. It was a very clever film, from the point of view of the powers that be. It made great play about the freedom to think, write, make up your mind yourself, and organise to influence Parliament in the direction of your point of view.

It gave examples of newspapers and political party speakers, describing a measure as in the best interests of the country, and others describing the same measures as one that would bring the country to ruin. It gave a picture of a man at the bench just after the war who was told that the man whose job he had taken was coming back from the Army to his old job, and the wartime worker (who was rejected from the Army on account of ulcers) getting the sack. It then showed the opposite look of the two men to the question of the returned soldier. All through the picture there was a discussion between two men at an exhibition—one contending that no matter what you did, nothing would come of it, and the other arguing that you should listen and read all points of view until you made up your mind, and then organise to influence Parliament. The latter was the main speaker, and his points were illustrated by flashes on the screen.

In fact, the film was so beautifully fair that one felt there was a catch in it somewhere. And there was! It was prepared for the purpose of easing the troubles in connection with the rehabilitation of soldiers after the war. Its sponsors obviously wanted to drive home two main ideas.

Firstly, that this is a country with institutions that were worth all the miseries involved in defending them.

Secondly, that if you are disgruntled over your conditions you can organise to improve them; if you are active enough, get a large enough body together and exercise patience, you can influence Parliament to remedy, in the course of time, the most pressing evils. But there was no suggestion in the film about a basic cause for the evils mentioned, and hence no suggestion of abolishing this cause. Thus you were urged to occupy yourself with piece-

meal legislation, palliatives, which would keep your mind off the idea of abolishing the system from which the evils arise. The method of procedure that has been followed by reformers for over a hundred years and still leaves the mass of people groaning under burdens, both old and new.

The illustrations of reform activity that were given in the film were examples of the limitation of the outlook put forward.

He mentioned Wilberforce, and said he was instrumental in abolishing slavery. Well he wasn't. Slavery still flourished long after his day. But there is more to it than even that. Wilberforce was a pillar of the Church and, as Lecky points out in his *History of European Morals* (Lecky was a Protestant!):—

"Slavery was distinctly and formally recognised by Christianity, and no religion ever laboured more to encourage a habit of docility and passive obedience." (Page 66, Vol. 2.)

"Christianity for the first time gave the servile virtues the foremost place in the moral type." (Page 68, Vol. 2.)

What was Wilberforce's attitude towards the oppressed at the time he was agitating against negro slavery in America? In the period following the Battle of Waterloo, when industry was changing over from hand work to machine work, children of six years of age and upwards were employed for long hours in factories; girls and boys were working up to sixteen hours a day in coal mines. Wilberforce was deaf to all appeals for assistance on their behalf. He, and those who associated with him, shed tears over the condition of the black slaves in far-away America (whose traders were threatening to undersell English traders by the use of cheap labour) and were blind to the anguish of the tiny white slaves at their door. He used his influence to support the Government in savage acts of repression against the overworked and starving workers. In 1818, when a peaceful meeting of working men assembled at Peter's Fields to protest against oppressive regulations, a body of militia set upon and massacred numbers of them. Wilberforce opposed any enquiry into the matter, and the same year voted £1,000,000 to build new churches!

Such was one of the reformers held up for admiration by the sponsors of the film. The film also put forward as

examples Lord Shaftesbury and Florence Nightingale.

Shaftesbury right enough did a lifetime of good work mitigating some of the worst evils of the factory system, and did it against opposition and vilification by the factory owners and their supporters. But he also lived on the same basis as they did, and consequently did not think of abolishing a system that, at best, involved wage slavery and its consequences for the mass of the people.

Florence Nightingale was an active, energetic woman, who was appalled at the slipshod method of dealing with wounded soldiers during the Crimean War. She brought some order into the confusion, helped to make a more effective army, but was not interested in abolishing the system from which wars sprung.

Though the film urged you to think for yourself, the sponsors wanted you to get a satisfied feeling that everything is fundamentally all right if only people would spend their time ironing out some of the wrinkles in the complicated system of production for profit. Thus production for profit could go ahead piling up comfort and security for some, insecurity and misery for the mass, but at the same time it was the best of all possible systems.

We also urge working men and women to think for themselves. Our idea of thinking for ourselves differs in important particulars from what the film portrayed, and what it left out. One of the things we face is the fact that after over a century of remedial legislation the world is still an unhappy place for most of its inhabitants. The alleged progress has been, to a considerable extent, backwards. For instance:—

Freedom of expression—but not for the S.P.G.B. on the B.B.C.

Freedom of expression—but you must not hold Parliament up to ridicule.

Freedom of expression—except for the libel laws. The truer the facts, the greater the libel.

Freedom of expression—except for the action of powerful individuals, groups and governments, who take action to deny expression of what hurts their interests or their particular outlook.

On the very day the film was shown the following appeared on the front page of the *Daily Express*, relating to a statement sent to the Press Association by Lambeth Palace for circulation to the newspapers throughout Britain:—

"The statement arrived in the *Sunday Express* office headed: Private and confidential memo to Editors: We are requested on behalf of the Archbishop of Canterbury to send you the following:—

The Archbishop of Canterbury wishes to convey to editors his earnest hope that in the interests of the 14-year-old mother and her twins recently born in Scotland, it will not be felt necessary to make further comment on this case."

On the same page we are also informed that action had been taken officially to prevent the circulation of the current number of the American magazine *Newsweek* on account of its comments on a recent court case.

It does not matter what the intentions were of the people behind these two actions. They were, in fact, instances of the limitation of freedom of expression by people who set themselves up as judges of what people ought or ought not to read.

The conditions that limit all forms of freedom of expression are bound up with the present system of society in which goods are produced for the sole purpose of profit for the owners of the means of production and distribution. It is not the goodness or usefulness of a thing that

determines its production. If its production will realize a profit, it does not matter whether it is harmful, shoddy, or merely useless.

Profit comes out of the difference between what the workers get in wages or salary for producing, and what the owner gets for the sale of the article. Wars, crises, and industrial strife arise out of this basic position. They will plague the world until a new system of society is established in which all that is in and on the earth is the common possession of all mankind. Where all will join in co-operative production, privilege will no longer exist, and each will take according to his need.

GILMAC

HOW WELL IS THE WELFARE STATE?

The concluding article of this series has unavoidably been held over till next month.

HACKNEY BRANCH SOCIAL

At "PEMBURY ARMS" (nr. Hackney Downs Station)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19th at 7.30 p.m.

Tickets 2/6

DELEGATE MEETING

At HEAD OFFICE

Saturday and Sunday, October 5th and 6th.

Saturday - 2 p.m. — 6 p.m.

Sunday - 11 a.m. — 1 p.m.

and 2 p.m. — 6 p.m.

PUBLIC DEBATE

"Which Party Should the Working Class Support
—The Union Movement or The Socialist Party of
Great Britain?"

Speakers: S.P.G.B.—J. D'Arcy
Union Movement—E. J. Ham

LAMBETH TOWN HALL

Monday, November 4th at 7.30 p.m.

Admission Free

DOCUMENTARY FILMS at HEAD OFFICE

Documentary Films followed by brief Socialist comments at H.Q.

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, S.W.4.

(near Clapham North Tube Station)

Every Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting is then open for questions and discussion which can be continued in the Social Room afterwards when light refreshments will be on sale. Visitors particularly welcome.

Oct. 13th "We Live in Two Worlds"—E. HARDY.

" 20th "Neighbourhood Fifteen"—R. AMBRIDGE.

" 27th "A · B · C · A"—F. WARLOW.

Nov. 3rd "The Londoners"—V. PHILLIPS.

" 10th "World of Plenty"—A. FAHY

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES IN FRENCH

For the benefit of any readers who may have contacts in France, we give below a translation into French of our Object and Declaration of Principles. Further copies of this translation may be obtained on request.

LE BUT DU PARTI SOCIALISTE

La création d'un ordre social où les moyens de produire et de distribuer seront la propriété de toute la société et seront administrés démocratiquement dans l'intérêt du peuple entier.

Déclaration des Principes

Le Parti Socialiste affirme:

1. Que la constitution de la société actuelle est basée sur le monopole des moyens de subsistance (i.e. la terre, les fabriques, moyens de transport, etc.) par la classe capitaliste ou propriétaire et la servitude de la classe ouvrière qui en résulte et qui est cependant la seule productrice des richesses économiques.

2. Que, par conséquent, il existe dans la société un antagonisme d'intérêts se manifestant en une lutte de classes entre ceux qui possèdent mais ne produisent pas et ceux qui produisent mais ne possèdent pas.

3. Que cet antagonisme ne peut être aboli que par l'émancipation de la classe ouvrière de la domination propriétaire par la conversion des moyens de production et de distribution en propriété commune et leur contrôle démocratique par le peuple entier.

4. Étant donné que dans l'ordre de l'évolution des classes, celle des travailleurs est la dernière à s'émanciper, cette émancipation entraînera en même temps l'émancipation de toute l'humanité, sans distinction de race ou de sexe.

5. Que cette émancipation doit être l'œuvre de la classe ouvrière elle-même.

6. Que, étant donné que l'institution gouvernementale, y compris les forces armées de la nation, n'existent que pour conserver le monopole et le contrôle de la classe capitaliste sur les richesses enlevées aux ouvriers, le prolétariat doit s'organiser politiquement en pleine connaissance de cause pour la conquête des pouvoirs gouvernementaux, afin que cette institution, y compris ces forces, peuvent être converties d'un instrument d'oppression en un agent d'émancipation et d'abolition de privilèges aristocratiques et plutocratiques.

7. Que, étant donné que les partis politiques ne sont que l'expression d'intérêts de classes, et que l'intérêt de la classe ouvrière est diamétralement opposé aux intérêts de toutes les sections de la classe propriétaire, le parti ayant pour but l'émancipation de la classe ouvrière, doit être hostile à tout autre parti politique.

8. Le Parti Socialiste entre donc dans l'arène d'activité politique, résolu à la lutte contre tous les autres partis politiques, qu'ils soient prétendus travaillistes ou ouvertement capitalistes, et fait appel à tous les membres de la classe ouvrière de se ranger sous sa bannière en vue d'accélérer la fin du système social qui les prive des fruits de son travail, et afin que la pauvreté cède la place au confort et bien-être, le privilège a l'égalité et l'esclavage à la liberté.

Pour tous renseignements supplémentaires, s'adresser à:—

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

52, Clapham High Street,
London, S.W.4.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.

2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.

3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.

4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.

5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.

6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.

7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.

8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ... 3.30—5 p.m.

East Street

(Walworth) Oct. 6th 11 a.m.

" 13th 12 noon

" 20th 12 noon

" 27th 1 p.m.

Whitestone Pond

(Hampstead) ... 11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Finsbury Pavement ... Tuesdays
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Benzie Road, Dundee.

EDINBURGH: Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh

MANCHESTER Sec.: J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. 'Phone: D15bury 5709.

OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

REDHILL AND REIGATE DISTRICT—C. E. Smith, 88, Chart Lane, Reigate Surrey.

SWANSEA—Enquiries to V. Brain, 17, Bryn a Wellon Rd., Pencoolgi, Nr. Llanelly

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (Oct. 3rd and 17th) at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: S. Roope, 42, Avalon Road, Orpington, Kent.

EALING Fridays at 8 p.m. sharp. Weekly at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. E. A. Darrock, 51, Plant St., Glasgow, E.1. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (Oct. 9th and 23rd) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kilvingrove) meets alternate Mondays (Oct. 14th and 28th) at 8 p.m. at Partick Burgh Halls, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., at Bethnal Green Town Hall (Patriot Square entrance). Sec.: A. H. Wood, 84, Millfield Ave., Walthamstow, E.17.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m., Oct. 9th and 23rd, 108c, Goldhurst Terrace, (near) Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 111, Upper Tollymore Park, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MO1 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 17, Cotswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. Enquiries to Sec. J. G. Grisley, at that address.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae," Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, Felham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsey, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

HACKNEY BRANCH — ECONOMICS CLASS

Wednesdays, October 9th and 23rd and fortnightly thereafter at 7.30 p.m.

Bethnal Green Town Hall, E.2.

Tutors: W. Read and E. Wilmott.

GLASGOW MEETINGS (GLASGOW CITY BRANCH)
CENTRAL HALLS (BATH ST.) SUNDAYS at 7.30

- Oct. 6th "The Way Ahead"—J. Richmond
" 13th "Workers In 'Wonder'-Land"—R. Reid
" 20th "Profits and Prophets"—J. Higgins
" 27th "What is a Labour Party?"—E. Darrock

Questions

Discussion

LETTERS FROM READERS INVITED

Our Annual Conference in April decided that a section of the SOCIALIST STANDARD be reserved for letters from readers as a regular feature. Readers are invited to send letters of comment and criticism and questions for answer. Letters should be kept as short as possible as space is limited, and the shorter the letters the larger the number that can be printed. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months (6 months, 3/-) for which 6/- is enclosed.

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PUBLIC DEBATE

Between the SECULAR SOCIETY and the S.P.G.B.

Sunday, October 6th at 7.15 p.m. at

"LAURIE ARMS,"

Crawford Place, W.1 (off Edgware Road,
adjacent to Marylebone Road.)

Admission Free

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 639 Vol. 53 November, 1957

Has Bevan Sold the Pass?

IS A SLUMP ON THE WAY?

LABOUR CONFERENCE THE WORST EVER

BEATING THE (HOT) AIR

FIFTY YEARS AGO

INSPIRING CONFERENCE IN U.S.A.

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

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4

A LOT OF PEOPLE who have for years worshipped Aneurin Bevan have now turned against their hero because of his support for the H-Bomb at the Labour Party Conference. Bevan says that he is as strongly against the bomb as ever he was and that his speech and vote at Brighton (decided on "after a lot of agonising thinking"), were only designed to find "the most effective way of getting the damned thing destroyed": but this is a bit too subtle for those who have passionately believed that Bevan was hundred per cent. against the bomb and now find that he isn't.

But actually the disgruntled Bevanites have little ground for complaint for, as it happens, Bevan has changed his politics hardly at all. If any deception has been carried out it is their own self-deception; an obstinate refusal to take note of what Bevan has for years been saying and doing.

If a few of them are genuine pacifists who resolutely refuse to support armaments or war, they are fully entitled to be opposed to Bevan who supported World War II and the Korean War, and conscription and re-armament, but they cannot pretend that Bevan has deceived them about his record of war-supporting.

With others the revulsion of feeling may appear to be more soundly based, but again it will not stand examination. They take the view (like Bevan) that armaments are necessary and that war is sometimes unavoidable and must be supported no matter what the cost in death and destruction. They reject the Socialist view that war arises from capitalism and can only be got rid of by establishing Socialism. They can stomach it all, the millions of dead and maimed, the trench warfare, machine guns and artillery, the bombing raids, the napalm and even the A-Bomb—but the H-Bomb. No! The H-Bomb, they say is horrible, unthinkable, and on account of it they will destroy their beloved leader, Bevan. But they have no serious ground for indignation with Bevan on this count, for he long ago made it clear that in his view he and others who supported the second World War and the Labour Government of 1945-1951 have no moral or logical case against the H-Bomb.

Writing in the *News Chronicle* (9/3/1955) he said:—

"Those of us who concurred in the making of the atom bomb and tolerated the saturation bombing of the last war have no moral or logical case against the hydrogen bomb. All three are methods and weapons of imprecision, that is, it is known they will destroy the civilian population and all the civil installations of the enemy."

He went on to admit that the addition of the H-Bomb to the weapons of war would only be "carrying the logic of our past behaviour to its furthestmost extremities," but put his own view that on practical grounds every effort should

be made to get international agreement against the bomb. It is hard to see how those of his followers who swallowed all the other horrors of war making can justifiably wax indignant now because of a minute shift in Bevan's policy. Yet an irate reader of *Tribune* can write that Bevan's action has left "a gaping hole" in all the principles of the Socialist rank and file: "The tender, compassionate heart of our Socialism has been torn out and replaced with a dessicated calculating machine." (*Tribune*, 11/10/57).

Socialists, of course, never had any confidence in Bevan, or believed for one moment that he adhered to or ever had any understanding of Socialist principles; and nobody with Socialist principles would have supported him or the Labour Government or the wars of capitalism that that government had a hand in.

But then Socialists do not believe in leadership, the danger and uselessness of which are well shown by the Bevanite movement. If the Bevanites had been Socialists they would have had their own clear conviction that Socialists do not take on the administration of capitalism, and they would, therefore, never have supported the Labour Government. They would have known that the government that runs capitalism has to do all the obnoxious things that capitalism requires of them, including the waging of war. They would have seen the absurdity of putting a Labour Government in charge of British capitalism and of its war-machine with a mandate to keep it going and of then demanding of them that they behave as Socialists.

LABOUR CONFERENCE THE WORST EVER

J. CAMPBELL'S remark at the Labour conference that "Public ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange is the rich red blood of Socialism," turned out to be only a blush on his own cheek, or perhaps an erstwhile twinkle in Bevan's eye. Labourites have always used the above quoted formula—which they misrepresented as Socialism—as proof of the great dividing line between them and the old political parties. Like the Equator, it is an imaginary line. What the conference this year did do was to wipe out all the old familiar landmarks from the political map, leaving only an arid waste of as yet uncharted opportunism.

Morrison and Bevan

Morrison, from the conference floor, regurgitated a sickly past by pleading for full-blooded nationalisation instead of the new programme, "Industry and Society" (The Shareholders' State). Yet how different it all was a few conferences back. Then Morrison was on the platform, rebuking delegates who were demanding more full-blooded nationalisation, telling them: "There should be no nationalisation for the sake of nationalisation." And that "Nationalisation is not an end in itself, but merely a means to an end"; although what the end was he never explained. Then it was Bevan who foamed from the floor for more and yet more nationalisation, and declared: "Socialism could only come through the old hard agony of public ownership and control." But time marches on and now Bevan sat with the stuffed shirts, cheek by jowl with Gaitskell, whom he once called a "a dessicated calculating machine." And while "the old, hard agony

of public ownership" was being ditched in favour of "Industry and Society," he sat mute.

But the Bevanites were not and are not Socialists, they were everything and nothing, a motley collection of individuals united only by the leader's spell-binding oratory:—

"The Communist, the pacifist, the believer in the innate virtue of the Soviet State, the hater of American 'capitalism,' the general do-gooder," all see something of themselves reflected in the glowing rhetoric of Mr. Bevan."—(*Manchester Guardian*, 17/3/55.)

Well, they have got what they asked for; they laboured to feed his vanity and build his reputation, and now he doesn't much mind what they do. Will it cure them? That remains to be seen, but there is no evidence yet that they have learned the uselessness of leadership for the establishment of Socialism.

It might help them on their way to getting a better understanding if they noted that Bevan, whom they think has played them false, had his own ideas on leadership. The leader of the Labour Party ought to be, he said, not someone from "the top drawer of society" (meaning, presumably, Attlee and Gaitskell), but should be drawn "from those who had spent their lives in the Labour and Trade Union movement, and who not only understood Socialism with their heads, but knew it with their hearts." (*Manchester Guardian*, 18/6/51). And it all ends with the heart of Bevan and the head of Gaitskell and Attlee, uniting as one on the Labour Party's H-bomb policy. So little difference does the kind of leader make, and so necessary is it that the workers should learn to think for themselves and not leave their thinking to leaders. H.

A Vote-catching Conference

The conference itself was merely a dummy run for the General Election. Delegates were shamelessly told that nationalisation as a vote winning proposition no longer payed dividends. In fact, it was becoming a vote loser, and Labour leaders would sooner forgo nine-tenths of some alleged nationalisation principle than one-tenth of their polling prospects. Nationalisation had proved an unpalatable carrot to many of the electors and a more synthetic morsel had been cooked by the party chefs in the hope of stimulating the sluggish appetites of the voters.

The New "Socialism"

It was therefore the task of the Platform, a la Aladdin, to offer "New Socialism" for old. As there were no Socialists at the conference—new or old—the offer was accepted to the tune of 5,382,000 to 1,442,000 on a card vote. Thus, the rubber stamped approval of the big unions once again set its seal on yet another document.

As a piece of nonsense literature, "Industry and Society" ranks with "Alice Through the Looking Glass." In fact, the "Red Queen" herself could have fittingly presided over such a conference. This New Socialism is however neither Socialism nor new, in that its proposition is the investment of government funds in private industries. British governments have since the time of Disraeli

bought shares for the Government in the Suez Canal Company, undertaken either indirectly through public utilities or even directly, investments in private concerns. Today these investments are enormous and cover a very wide range of industries. A fact probably unknown to many Labourites. The old Fabians believed that by progressively steepened taxation they could invest in state industry outside of private capitalist concerns. Even they never dreamed that their Fabian "Socialism" would be realised by investing inside of capitalist concerns. Nor did they ever imagine using the Stock Exchange and capital market as social instruments for the emancipation of the vast majority.

A future Labour Government will then devote insurance funds to buying shares in selected industries. They might, of course, be content to be merely sleeping partners or rentiers. But if in certain concerns the level of efficiency falls and we may add also the rate of exploitation, then the government as considerable shareholders might demand reorganisation, or even in certain circumstances take over. So if management fail to crack the whip sufficiently, Big Brother will be watching. No doubt the Labour Party see this as one means of getting a greater intensity of effort from the workers. It would seem that the Labour Party, having exploited the workers politically, proposes to assist in their economic exploitation to the greatest possible extent.

No doubt government share buying will help to expand business and profits, while the sway of unpaid labour accruing to the government might help to lighten the burden of capitalist taxation in the running of the capitalist state. Perhaps the New Socialism will be interpreted—from each according to his capacity to each according to his shares.

Of course, one effect of government share buying could be to enhance the share values of the concerns involved, and at the same time depreciate gilt edged securities. What is more important is the fact that concerns in which some future Labour Government proposes to invest will be known as "socialised sectors" and government participation in exploitation announced as a further step towards the Socialist Commonwealth. In such sectors workers will be told they are not merely working for capitalists but their own government, and hence failure to respond to productivity drives, it will be said, will be a blow to the government and indirectly a blow to themselves, and no doubt the "Socialist" employers will add their voices to such appeals. And if the workers strike in these "socialised sectors" they may well be told that they are striking against the government—a Labour Government; and such action may well turn a friendly government into an enemy government.

The Repeal of the Rent Act

The demand for repeal of the Rent Act was a specious effort to seduce from the Tories the so-called middle class voters, who live in houses which will be decontrolled next October and who will be faced with much higher rents and insecurity of tenure. The Labour Party have talked about "reasonable" rents being charged if and when it is returned. Nevertheless, the Labour spokesmen at their conference declined to say what constitutes a reasonable rent. One of them added neither would it be possible to forecast the future cost of house maintenance and repairs. Rents of workers' houses have already

gone up, and they will be going up again in the next few months and it is pretty certain from the remarks of Mr. Greenwood that in the Labour Party's view these higher levels will constitute reasonable rents.

The Labour Party's proposal to substitute a municipal landlord for a private one does not touch the real crux of the housing problem. As an alternative to Tory property owning democracy they are prepared to offer 100 per cent. mortgages on millions of houses long past their best, or alternatively to exact from tenants heavy contributions to the local authorities for the upkeep of old property.

If housing is one of the main social tragedies of today, then the burden of guilt lies heavy on the Labour Party. It was the Labour Party that continued the War Government's practice of keeping rents low by rent controls in order to keep wages pegged to a given level. This meant that in view of rising costs rents became uneconomic and thus provided the landlord with sufficient reasons for not carrying out normal maintenance and repairs. This, of course, has greatly aggravated the housing situation. If rents had risen with rising prices the workers, using a favourable economic situation, would have demanded higher wages, and the loss would have had to be borne by manufacturers instead of landlords. But at least landlords would, in their own interests, have sought to maintain their property in reasonable repair. Thus the Labour Party's policy of low rents in the interest of the manufacturers has had dire consequences on the state of millions of working class dwellings.

Nor did the Labour Government when in office make any serious attempt to deal with the housing problem. Their 250,000 houses a year was so inadequate for housing needs that even the Tories increased it to 300,000 per year. Nor do the Labour Party now propose to make any real contribution to the housing problem. They envisage no scheme of new housing construction to solve housing shortages, rather their propositions are designed to keep up those houses which, as the years go by, are in danger of falling down. And this from a party which has always claimed that it would solve the housing problem, and in 1945, through the mouth of Bevan, said that under a Labour Government there would be no housing problem.

Crossman as the Man from the "Pru"

It was left to Mr. Crossman to sell insurance to the delegates as a preliminary to selling it to the electorate. It was another palpable effort to attract sections of the voters who are still under Tory allegiance. The proposal was pensions at half-pay. The employee would be levied 3 per cent. of his earnings, and the rest of the contribution would be made by the Government and employer. A man earning £30 a week would contribute more, and so would the State. The Labour Party thus propose to perpetuate permanently the inequalities of the wage system into old age. Mr. Crossman's lame excuse that trade unions operate on an acceptance of inequality in wages is an admission that he regards income inequalities as a norm of any social situation.

So countless workers who live on full pay penury now will after fifty years of work and fifty years' contributions live on half-pay penury. The contributions of workers will, of course, be invested on the best insurance lines in order to secure for the government or governments operating the scheme the highest possible profits.

And so the unpaid labour from the hides and carcasses of the workers in their working years will be meagrely redistributed back to them in their non-working years. No doubt if the classic author of all State insurance schemes—the Liberal, David Lloyd George—could have heard Crossman he might have raised his eyebrows in approval. And no doubt if Keir Hardie could have witnessed the progress of his party he would have back-somersaulted in disgust.

It might be as well to mention here that one of the chief planks of the Labour Party in the past was non-contributory pension schemes. Pensions should come out of taxation thundered old time Labourites. Their case against the Tories was that contributory schemes were Tory swindles. They are now working the swindle themselves, and so the plank of pensions via taxation becomes sawdust promises.

The Labour Conference touched a new low on old age pensions. Crossman deplored the abject poverty of countless old age pensioners living on £2 per week. He proposed to raise them from abject poverty to mere poverty by raising the pension to £3 per week in the happy event of the Labour Party coming to power. According to someone at the conference, £3 per week was the decently human minimum on which old people could live. To talk of £3 per week as a decent human minimum is perhaps one of the most indecent things said at an indecent conference.

Bevan and the Bomb

It was fitting that the H-bomb provided the one big explosion at the conference. And even more fitting that Bevan should detonate the Executive's policy, which is to retain it under a Labour Government. Bevan was then jeered and booed as an idol with feet of clay by his old followers with heads of clay. Mr. Bevan has revealed to an admiring world that he has all the essential qualities of a great statesman; i.e., he can be all things to all men. Thus he supported the last war, and subsequently other military adventures, yet contrived to spread the illusion he was an anti-militarist. He helped to pilot the greatest of all armament programmes through the House of Commons, and yet many came to accept him as a man of peace. He supported the dropping of the atom bomb, and now the retention of the H-bomb. Nevertheless, at New Delhi he appeared to give the impression that he was against the H-bomb. He said just before the Christmas Island tests: "I wish to heaven Britain would rise to her moral stature by surrendering her hydrogen-bomb experiment. I can see no good purpose in Britain arming herself with that useless weapon." (*Daily Express*, 4/10/57). As a statesman, however, he can always correct an interpretation by someone who only reads the lines of his speeches and not in between them.

A READER DEFENDS THE LIBERAL PARTY

Finchley Road, London, N.W.2.
The Secretary, S.P.G.B.

Dear Sir,—Some months ago I wrote to you asking for an explanation of certain statements made about Marxism in the pamphlet *Socialist Comment*. I never received a reply, although when I sent for "Questions of the Day" it was quickly sent. I will not assume that you are only interested in spreading your ideas and not

And so the long line of rabble rousers who have passed into statesmen must now include Mr. Bevan. Like his compatriot Lloyd George, he has a silver tongue and a quicksilver mind. Unfettered by theory and unattached to any principle, he may serve as a pliable instrument for British Foreign Policy. And perhaps the "i" in Bevin will be replaced by an "a" as the greatest of Labour Foreign Secretaries.

No doubt after the Suez debacle and the tough time ahead in international affairs, a strong man and not a weak one like Eden must be found. Bevan, with his emotional oratory and power to persuade many people, seems to be the best strong man in sight. This may account for his sudden and dramatic build up in the Press. Even his political opponents, whom he once called "vermin," find him highly acceptable. Thus has the idol of the left become the darling of the right.

Bevan is, of course, the spokesman of the Labour policy to continue the Anglo-American axis—an axis which constitutes two hydrogen-bomb powers against one. It is true "Bevanites" and others can point to the sinister implications of such a policy. But would the banning of the H-bomb provide the basis of a peaceful solution in the real world of capitalism? If British capitalism decided to forgo the H-bomb as a bargaining factor in international politics, then American and Russian capitalism would go it alone, and with a lack of restraint that might well convert the cold war to boiling point. It would also mean that America would retreat to splendid but savage isolation and the cutting of her commitments with N.A.T.O. Moreover, the withdrawal of her economic support for Britain could have disastrous effects on the British economy. Emotionally minded leftists have yet to learn there are no alternatives under capitalism, at least no worthwhile ones.

Perhaps Krushchev in his little talk with Bevan suggested that Russia would prefer Britain with a H-bomb rather than without one.

Cousins, the T.G.W.U. chief, talked hysterically about the H-bomb. He said "he had a six-year-old daughter, and he would not compromise with anyone on the future of that girl." But Mr. Cousins belongs to a party whose support of wars and armaments have not hesitated to compromise the future of countless six-year-old daughters and sons. Are atom bombs, rockets and 1000 bomber raids any less a compromise in substance with the lives and futures of any human being? Nevertheless, although from the Bevanites viewpoint his heart was in the right place, his million union votes went to the wrong place; i.e., in support of the executive.

The Labour Party at its conference sought to expunge its murky past, but only to foreshadow an even blacker future.

E. W.

carrying to answer questions on them, but that an administrative hitch was the reason for your silence. I am now writing to ask you why you have deliberately distorted the facts about the Liberal Party in the booklet "Questions of the Day." As a Liberal I deeply resent the allegation made against the Liberal Party. First, you have deliberately tried to convey the impression that the Liberal Party is composed of capitalists of the High Tory

calibre. Nothing could be further than the truth. It is not clever to give accounts of nineteenth century Whig and so-called Liberal administration and then point to the Liberals of today. It is a cheap trick and is completely misleading. The nineteenth century Liberals were *in some measure* more enlightened than the Tories. This does not mean to say that the present-day Liberal Party follows their doctrines. Far from it; we only accept that which is good; e.g., Repeal of the Corn Laws. But why go back in history? Surely it is only the present that counts? But even if you must delve back into the past, at least be honest. Nothing is said about the great Liberal social reforms at the beginning of the twentieth century, and nothing about our Free Trade ideas.

Liberalism is identified with laissez-faire. But not, and this point must be stressed, of the 19th century variety. The Government should merely supervise industry, nationalising only public utilities, and keeping a sharp eye on restrictive practices, inflation, etc. In that way the evils of unfettered capitalism and the evils of bureaucratic Socialism can be avoided.

I am not asking you to share my beliefs [it would be futile in any case] but only to present them in a fair way.

Yours faithfully,

BRIAN M. LEVY.

REPLY.

We cannot trace our correspondent's earlier letter. We certainly have no wish to avoid answering questions, and if he will repeat them a reply will be forthcoming.

The letter goes on make charges about the contents of the S.P.G.B. pamphlet *Questions of the Day*, but the charges are quite unfounded. It is true that the chapter on the Liberal Party deals to a considerable extent with the actions of that party in the nineteenth century, but

it also deals with the programme of the Liberal Party at the 1950 General Election—about which our correspondent says nothing.

Our correspondent asks "Why go back in history?" This would, of course, be a legitimate point for the present-day Liberal Party to make if in fact that party repudiated the policies and actions of the Liberal Party and Liberal governments in the past. Until such repudiation is forthcoming and while the Liberal Party goes on claiming continuity with its own past, it will continue to be pertinent for us to expose what those Liberals were and what they did. And our correspondent does not give any evidence at all of any distortion on our part.

Our correspondent does name one of the "great social reforms" of the Liberal past and explicitly approves it—the repeal of the Corn Laws and the support for Free Trade. This is dealt with in our pamphlet, where it is pointed out that the Free Trade movement was one conducted by the Liberal factory owners for the purpose of getting cheap food and consequently low wages.

As regards the present-day activities of the Liberals, one of their main concerns is to promote schemes of profit-sharing. This is dealt with in our pamphlet, where it is pointed out that the Liberal aim is to get the workers to work harder and thus secure "increased profits," out of which increase the workers are to receive a share. Yet our correspondent writes indignantly at our charge that the Liberal Party is, as it always was, a party of capitalism.

His last point is equally revealing. He claims that the Liberal Party is in favour of nationalising certain industries. As nationalisation is State capitalism and does not serve the interests of the working class, this too, clearly demonstrates the capitalist character of the Liberal Party.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

BEATING THE (HOT) AIR

RECENTLY at Mount Mellary in Ireland there occurred a Social Study Conference. Reverend clerics and gentlemen who drank wine with them deliberated at some length on the "conditions of our times." The "ordinary citizen" was quite unaware that these pious gentlemen were lending oratorical grace to his whims and vices; pre-occupied at the bench, the loom, or just wandering in the shade of the "dole," he made no comment—nor was he expected to. Even our feathered friends in the trees around the quiet precincts of the famous Mount occupied themselves without distraction, inured as they are to the fatuity that is the stock-in-trade of such Social Study Conferences.

We would like to claim that this Conference discovered some means of eradicating even one of the evils which speaker after speaker dealt with to the point of monotony. Unfortunately it was not to be, and the only thing we learned from this august assembly of self-appointed national-saviours was that "the national morale is very low"—which is exactly what Paddy Murphy said (in East-Side vernacular) the week before the conference!

Conferences of this nature, however, are useful in one respect, they provide material for the leader writers in the local Press, and the conscious reader of such papers can find an interesting diversion from the usual X-word

puzzle; the idea being to rule out a sheet of paper under two headings, "Nonsense" and "Hypocrisy," apportioning points in order of merit between the conference itself and the leader writer's comments on same.

We regret that we are unable to donate a prize for a points win in either section by one or other of the parties; if such were available, however, we should without hesitation present it to the leader writer in the *Evening Mail* (Dublin) for his little gem under the title "Beating the Air" (9/8/57). We gave him few marks in the "Hypocrisy" section as we were obliged to concede the overwhelming superiority of the conference in that domain; but in the "Nonsense" section he was a winner all the way as witness:—

"This country is in greater need now of a leader of vision and energy than ever before in her history. Unhappily there does not seem to be anyone rising up now who seem likely to attain the stature of such men as O'Connell, Parnell, Kevin O'Higgins and one or two others of recent times."

This poor belated exponent of the "personality cult," with his clarion for an Irish Führer! A leader of vision, indeed! An Irish Lenin or Stalin? Or could it be a Hitler or Franco? Our school history books are a monotonous chronicle of such "men of vision," and yet we have conditions that cause naive leader writers to cry from amidst the chaos for a repeat performance. De

Valera was to the majority of the Irish people (and still is to a diminishing few) just such a "Leader of Vision." It is a vision, however, limited by the confines of our economic system.

We can compare such "vision" with the products of electric bulb manufacturers: each may lay claims to the quality of their particular product, "Mazda gives brighter light," "Osram give longer life," "Sunshine adds brightness to lightness," and so on. To a limited extent such claims may bear substantiation, but exposed to the exigencies created by a "short-circuit," it matters not one iota which bulb we use—the light goes out. And so with our "leaders," moulded and mandated to serve capitalism, they move within the stage to which they are confined. To a limited degree they may lay claim to this or that "virtue," but capitalism contains its inevitable "short-circuits," and when these occur it matters not what persons or parties occupy the parliamentary "socket"—the light of the "visionaries" goes out, and the masses are faced with blackness indeed!

Ireland, like every other country, has had a superabundance of leaders and visionaries. We can see their names immortalised on street designation plates and architectural edifices throughout the length and breadth of the country: and yet remains the scarce alleviated misery and terrible poverty of the working class in this pathetic island—the vision of whose denizens it would appear is to shake the dust of their native heath from their feet and find a place where:—

"They say there is food and work for all
And the sun shines always there."

The owners of the super-automobiles that clutter up the pavements outside the luxury hotels are not devoid of "vision," nor the means of implementing same. They have shown us "How you can buy Killarney"—by buying it! Often they are as "foreign" as the fine cars they ride in, but, paradoxically, it is they who can claim Ireland as THEIR country—literally!

But let us return to the grand humour of our leader writer and his "Beating the Air." An old joke this time, to be sure, but always one to make us laugh:

"WE need someone to preach the gospel of work and self-reliance." This surely qualifies for the Rip Van-Winkle comment of the season! We defy its author to give us one example of a newly-appointed government Minister, Social Study Conference, or Employer's Federation meeting which has not preached TO THE

WORKERS about the benefits of hard work!

The Minister for Social Welfare in the late Coalition Government, a certain Mr. Norton, Leader and Visionary of the reformist Irish Labour Party, for example, had hardly donned the robes of Ministerial office before there issued forth from his lips the time-dishonoured cry: "The workers must work harder . . . increased production . . . more exports"—though, incidentally, he had been known to declare that "Under our present social system (that is capitalism) greater production means a lower wage for the worker and higher profit for the owners of industry." (*Labour News*, 29/1/38).

It would appear that the Irish workers believed Mr. Norton, the Minister for Social Welfare, and not Mr. Norton the aspiring politician of yesterday, for they did indeed work harder; so hard, in fact, that between the time Mr. Norton made his first statement and his later Ministerial announcement they (the workers) increased the over-all volume of production by nearly thirty per cent. (Mr. Costello, in the Dail, 20/7/49). Yet, according to the cost of living figures published by the International Labour Office (Feb. 1949), the REAL WAGES OF THE WORKING CLASS IN EIRE HAD ACTUALLY DROPPED BELOW THE 1937 level! Taxable profits, on the other hand, had risen during the same period from £6,592,000 to £19,640,322! All of which goes to prove the benefits of harder work—to the capitalists!

The *Evening Mail* article continues to advise us that the underlying motif at the Mount Mellory Conference appeared to be the need to "revitalise the people," and comments that there is a great need to "awaken them (the people) to a sense of the realities of the national position as it is today and the grim prospects for the not-so-distant future if we do not pull ourselves together quickly."

With this, of course, we can have no quarrel; the economic position is indeed grim, and the need for us (the people) to do something about it is truly pressing. What should we do? Tinker with the effects of capitalism? Hold conferences and deliberate on the evils which capitalism creates?

We would suggest to our fellow-working men and women that they should band together with their class-comrades of the working class everywhere, for the ending of the basic cause of all our economic problems—capitalism. Let us by all means be "men of vision"—the vision of a war-less, wage-less, class-less world. In a word, a Socialist World.

R. MONTAGUE....

I know many staunch Socialists who uphold all these principles, so that W. B. is quite wrong in claiming that "as Socialists" we shun the things of Spirit.

Anti-Religionism is a Communist doctrine, not Socialist. Man is a Spirit allied to a body, of which I have absolute proof. How then can we fight the things of Spirit?

Man is a Spirit, allied to a body—of this I have indisputable proof. Art, Music, Song, the Dance, Poetry, fine literature and all things of Mother Nature are "things of the Spirit." How, then, can we overthrow them?

It is the absence of Spirituality in the world which breeds vice, crime, disease and suffering. If we overthrow Religion in the purest sense (and again I do not mean

"Creedalism") we must become as the beasts of the field.

Sincerely,

(Mme.) SANDRA OLAND,
Concert pianist and psychic writer.

Coggeshall, Essex.

Dear Sirs,—A brief line to record the appreciation of my friends and I for that really unique journal, the S.S. Since the time of reading my first copy nothing seems quite the same—certainly the run-of-the-mill dailies, with their hysterical clamour for this and that cause, have been relegated to their correct status—alongside the horror comics and science fiction. True, masterpieces of bourgeois "culture" these! The only flaw in this new-found awareness is noticed when one observes fellow-workers avidly soaking up the capitalist sludge in such misused toilet-paper as the *Daily Sketch*—then I know the real meaning of that overworked word frustration.

Well, I suppose we must accept the old adage re "the toughest stone"—in the meantime thanks again for a really well appreciated journal from a few enlightened wage-slaves.—Yours,

G. T. CROXFORD.

P.S.—Specially appreciated are the razor-sharp com-

mentaries on the "Men of God"—they are priceless!

Morecombe.

Dear Editors,—There is a well-known variant question regarding Socialists not joining larger organisations such as L.P., C.P. I.L.P., etc., so as not to be splitters—see end of Sidney Warr's letter, S.S. Sept.—the editorial reply does not touch.

Many times I have pointed out that in ordinary matters people seek TRUTH. Anyone who is pointed out an error, falsity or bad fitting part in, say, a machine, immediately seeks to correct it. How many times have Labour folk, C.P.-ers and I.L.P.-ers, been told their case was wrong; i.e., not Socialism (Marxism): but they still keep harping on the same old reformist note. The only excuse—not logical argument—they make is that the S.P.G.B. is small. So why they do not make a little effort and get right and join us, make us bigger and better; i.e., work for Socialism, I really don't know, unless it is fear or laziness. May we see thousands of Sidney Warrs filling up forms "A" and not being led by leaders who likewise are not interested in Socialism? The question goes very deep for a short letter.

Yours fraternally,

MAXI SHAW.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

The London Propaganda Programme has gone according to plan, the meetings have been successful in every way. The last meeting of the series is in the form of a debate which is being held at Lambeth Town Hall on Monday 4th November. This debate is with the Union Movement—details of time, speakers and title are in the "notices" columns.

The Speakers' Study Class continues its excellent work. The members are actually punctual on every occasion, and are keen and hardworking, so much so that the tutors are confident that our speaking strength will be augmented next year by several "graduates" from the class.

Comrade Gilmac is back in London after his trip to Canada and America. In this issue he has written a brief report of his experiences. He was certainly afforded a very warm welcome by our comrades in the West, and in Gilmac's brief report to the E.C. he modestly suggested that his visit had stimulated the Comrades into planning more propaganda drives. It is to be hoped that his trip will pave the way for others to be able to visit our Comrades across the Atlantic.

The Central Literature Sales Committee again appeal for the utmost support for an all out drive to sell the S.S. during the month of November. Arrangements are similar to previous drives, and branches will have received our circular by the time you read this. It is an uphill climb—this selling of our journal (like all Socialist propaganda), but we ask members not to let this deter them and to keep on climbing. Contact your branch and give them a hand; they certainly need it.



Documentary Films at Head Office are now being run every Sunday evening at Head Office. These proved most successful last year, and there is always time for questions and discussion after the showing of the film. The titles for this month are listed in this issue and they cover a wide variety of subjects.

The Autumn Delegate Meeting was not so well attended as could be wished, but the agenda was completed in good time; in fact, the meeting finished at 4 p.m. on Sunday afternoon. Despite a smaller attendance over £8 was collected towards Party funds.

Isolated Members and Sympathisers are invited to act as contact secretaries for the establishment of Socialist discussion groups in their locality. A directory will be published in these columns. All who are interested in this task should first contact the Groups Secretary at Head Office, who will keep them posted with any activities which may result.

P. H.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Views put in letters in the correspondence column do not necessarily represent the Party's attitude).

S.W.16.

Dear Sir,—In his article "Instructions for M.A.s." W. Brain asserts that only by breaking the bonds of religion shall we survive, and that "as Socialists we fight the powers temporal and spiritual."

True religion divorced from Creedalism, which is man made, embraces all races and colours as brothers and sisters, recognises the Fatherhood of God and personal responsibility towards families and humanity.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

NOVEMBER



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

IS A SLUMP ON THE WAY?

WE do not know whether the present rumblings of trade depression will turn into something really big and nasty, or whether—like several other post-war scares—the storm will be mild and short. Perhaps, like the textile slump of the early nineteen fifties, or the motor car slump of two years ago, it will be limited in its effect and duration.

The really significant thing is that nobody can be really sure about it until it happens. It simply is not true, as the Labour and Tory Parties both claim to believe, that capitalism is now under effective control, so that its ups and downs can be foreseen and controlled, and its evil effects of depression ironed out or wafted away.

You Wanted Lower Prices: You May Get Them

Certain it is that economists, politicians and business men are worried, not about the bank rate and the high prices associated with inflation, but about the low prices of raw materials. They have all pretended that the only thing needed to make this country a veritable paradise was falling prices, but now that there is a possibility of this happening they are scared.

Under the heading "Commodity Price Falls Point to Trade Slump," the *Daily Mail* City column has published gloomy comments on the bleak outlook for business:—

"Not for a long time in the climate of post-war conditions have prices of basic materials used in manufacturing industry been lower than they are now.

"The decline during September ranged up to 5.1 per cent. in raw wool, 6.9 per cent. in copper, and 6.4 per cent. in rubber.

"Cotton fell 1.7 per cent., linseed oil 5.9 per cent., and lead 2.3 per cent., while oil showing a drop of 7.7 per cent., and sulphur 5.4 per cent."—(*Daily Mail*, 11/10/57.)

If you have been thinking that lower prices are what you want, you may now be going to get them, but before you rejoice, read on:—

"Shrinking prices reduces the purchasing power of countries which produce the commodities, reduces their capacity to import, curtails orders to exporting countries, brings inventory and stock losses to manufacturers and spreads business depression and financial difficulties.

"Commodities are falling because suppliers have caught up with demand and even exceeding it as in base metals and the process is spreading.

"Consumer markets have been unable to absorb all the finished products because the prices are more than people can pay without continuous inflation and depreciation of money.

"Factories must turn out more goods for the money or, if people cannot buy, there will be less work and a trade slump."

Raw material production has got dangerously ahead of market demand, as it did in the years before the great slump of the nineteen thirties. So prices are falling, but the defenders of capitalism do not know whether this is good or bad, whether to lament or rejoice. For only one day after the *Daily Mail's* City Editor had penned his words of gloom the same newspaper's leader writer was taking the opposite view. He reported, under the heading "A Bit of Gammon," that the National Farmers' Union was "seriously perturbed about the fall in prices" of bacon, and regarded it as a threat "to the economics of production"; but instead of approving this attitude on the part of the farmers, the leader writer (who apparently does not read his own City column) wrote:—

"This is the first time, even in this era of crazy economics, that we have been told that a drop in prices harms the housewife. We always thought she suffered when prices rose, but we must have been mistaken."—(*Daily Mail*, 12/10/57.)

He went on:—

"Bacon is being over-produced and, under competition, prices have fallen. That in itself is a good thing. It is what the Government want."

In the meantime if the City Editor has a word with the leader writer, the latter may learn, to his astonishment, that though the Government may have been saying that it wanted lower prices, it will soon get very worried indeed if prices go on falling.

Is there no hope that the catastrophe of falling prices may be averted?

The *Financial Times* (11th October, 1957) says that business men are anxiously awaiting news that the "expected improvement in industrial activity in the U.S." (which has so far failed to appear) will turn up and save them by putting up raw material prices again and mop up some of the surplus. The *Manchester Guardian* (9/10/57) sees reason for hope at the other end, in the destruction of some of the accumulated stocks, for Australia has just had the happy event of a failure of her wheat harvest through drought. "Now drought has so affected the prospects for this year's crop in Australia that it seems all the Australian carry-over is likely to be needed for home and export commitments to be met in the next twelve months." Only a few months ago the Australian Wheat Board was anxiously wondering what to do with all the wheat surplus it could not sell. The wool crop, too, has been damaged by drought.

There is yet another ray of hope. Now that the Russians have got ahead in the lunatic moonbeam race, every country that feels the patriotic need to keep up with the Russians must go in for the same in a big way.

According to the *Daily Sketch* (7/10/57) we could have our own British satellite bowling round the earth at a cost of a mere £500 million; think how much tin and copper and rubber and oil and lead might be wasted on building and launching it and thus send up prices again.

Of course, this and the other forms of waste that help to keep capitalism going might, but for the crazy social system, be used to get rid of the poverty of masses of the world's population, the undernourishment and the slums. If it cost the Russians £500 million, that would have gone a long way to remove the shocking slums of

Moscow and other Russian cities. The *Daily Mail* talks about crazy economics. Of course, it is crazy that people should have to be glad that capitalism manages to waste so much of the wealth it produces, and glad that a harvest failure in Australia may help to prevent factory unemployment in England.

But capitalism is crazy like that all the time—though not half so crazy as that about 24 million British workers, who ought to be voting to end capitalism and achieve Socialism, actually voted (as Tory, Labour, Liberal and Communist supporters) for capitalism at the last general election in 1955.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, November, 1907.)

A Travesty of Socialism

Undoubtedly one of the greatest hindrances to a clear understanding of Socialism is the misrepresentation to which it is subject, not only from opponents, but also from those who, at times, call themselves Socialists. Here, for example, is Mr. Jas. Parker, Labour M.P. for Halifax, which position he secured by making a compact with the Liberal Party, assuring an audience at Swadlincote Town Hall (on October 8th) that the Army, Navy and Post Office are Socialistic institutions, and that the last Government decided to socialise the telephones. Did anyone ever hear such twaddle? What is Socialism? It is the ownership and control by all the people of all the means of production and distribution of wealth. It is thus the

very antithesis of capitalism. How then can you have Socialistic institutions in the midst of capitalism? The Army and Navy exist for the purpose of protecting the British capitalist class against the capitalist class of other countries, and to enable them to extend their sphere of exploitation. Yet these, according to our I.L.P. oracle, are Socialistic! And the Post Office is admittedly an institution where the lower grade of workers are abominably sweated in order to provide a huge profit, which the P.M.G. (Tory or Liberal) may apply to the reduction of taxation. And as taxes do not affect the working class in the least, as their exploitation takes place in the factory—they are robbed at the pay-box—what does it matter to them whether taxes are high or low?

There is all the difference in the world between State Capitalism and Socialism... To argue that certain capitalist institutions are Socialist ones is misleading, and those who so argue are either ignorant or fraudulent.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN SCENE

THE treatment of the non-whites by the whites in South Africa has caused some concern throughout the rest of the world. The application of "Apartheid" by the Nationalist Government, in power since 1948, runs counter to what the rest of the world is doing with regard to racial relationships. What lies behind this policy?

It is fair to say that most of the development of the country has been undertaken by those who have most recently arrived—the building of the railways, farming development and irrigation, and the industrial growth of the last fifty or sixty years—have largely been carried out by those who went there for the specific purpose of doing certain jobs. They may have settled in the country afterwards, or returned whence they came.

The earlier settlers, and some of the later ones, were farmers. Land was available in abundance, and farms were huge, and incredibly isolated by European standards. Native labour was, and is cheap and the tendency has been to shrink somewhat from the bustling activity of the rest of the world and revert to something that resembles feudalism.

The geographical position of South Africa is such that there are no really marked seasonal differences, and the conception of the passage of time is very easily lost. The two world wars also made little impact on rural South

Africa, certainly insufficient to act as mileposts in the memory. To the rural Nationalist there are only two outstanding dates—1835, the year the Great Trek commenced, and the Boer War of 1899. In both cases the British element were the villains of the piece.

Rural Stagnation

This state of affairs—activity and development in the towns, and isolated quietude in the country—might have gone on indefinitely, but for two things. The soil is generally poor, and soon becomes worked out, unless carefully conserved. Social activities on the farms are few, and children are thus produced in large numbers.

With a poor and inadequate memory of the past, life tends to become concentrated in the present, with little or no thought for the future. Thus, upon the death of a farmer the future of the farm in particular, and the agricultural community in general, would not receive much consideration. The farm would be divided equally amongst the male offspring, who would attempt to carry on in the traditional way.

It is easy to see that, after two or three generations, the original enormous farms would degenerate into small holdings—too small and too barren to support families. Thus South Africa developed its "Poor White" problem.

This problem, like most others in South Africa, was solved by those who had arrived more recently. Factories have been built by the hundred in the last twenty to thirty years and they have been able to absorb the poor whites as they have left their impoverished holdings and trekked to the towns. They have shown themselves capable of carrying out unskilled and semi-skilled tasks, and a few exceptional ones have acquired skilled status. They now form a large part of the town populations, and Afrikaans is heard, and taught, in places where English was the only language a generation ago.

Since the 1939-45 War the demand for labour has been in excess of the white supply, and non-whites have been taken on in increasing numbers. They have proved themselves, in general, no less able to learn new activities than did the poor whites at an earlier date.

Cheap Labour

This is the basis of apartheid. The South African capitalists would probably prefer to hire workers of their own colour, and who spoke their own language, other things being equal. But they have found that the poor white will work for less money than the man who was born and educated in the town; and that the non-white, with an even more frugal background, will work for only a small fraction of what the poor white will demand. They will, if unrestricted employ the cheapest labour that can do the job.

The South African franchise is restricted mainly to the white population, with a constituency delimitation that permits of considerable "loading" either way. This has kept the Nationalists, who mainly represent the poor whites, in power for nearly ten years, although they cannot claim an actual majority of the votes cast at the last two general elections.

They have dressed the simple economic needs of their followers in suitable national and religious dress, and have been quite successful in safeguarding their interests. This is sometimes carried to farcical extremes, as reported by the Johannesburg Star on the 18th March, 1957.

"White" Jobs

"The dividing line between white men's work and non-Europeans' work—in other words, the industrial colour bar—is for the first time being given a precise

definition in South Africa. The Minister of Transport, Mr. Schoeman, revealed that the management of the railways had been corresponding with the Artisan Staff Association about the possibility of assigning certain tasks, particularly in the signals section, to non-Europeans. The Association had replied that the following were white men's jobs and could not be handed over to non-whites.

"Finishing wire joints started by a fitter; putting on wire pulleys under supervision; using a spanner for dismantling purposes; i.e. loosening bolts and nuts of not less than $\frac{1}{2}$ in. diameter; running wires through pulleys under supervision; putting on and finger-tightening bolts and all types of fastening; inserting and opening split pins."

Future Problems

Probably the most striking thing about the South Africa political set-up is the fact that the political power is not at present held by those who own the bulk of the wealth. The Nationalists, however, have not made any far-reaching attempts to interfere with the normal workings of capitalism, to date. Their plans for the future, however, as far as they can be ascertained, involve compulsory migration and re-settlement of large sections of the population, and the consequent removal and re-establishment of industry.

The entry of investment capital into the country has practically ceased, causing some concern among the less irresponsible of the Nationalist leaders. Another General Election is due there in 1958, and it will be interesting to note whether they produce a policy in line with the needs of capitalism, or whether they press on regardless with new developments of Apartheid.

Whatever the result of the election, one thing is clear from the Socialist point of view—it will be very difficult to convince the many and diverse sections of the South African working class that they have a common interest and a common enemy—capitalism. The best thing we can do to help is to intensify our efforts to spread Socialist knowledge wherever we may happen to be.

The Nationalists impose a rigorous censorship on incoming publications, but they will not be able to shut out the knowledge that the more advanced nations are becoming Socialist if, indeed, they remain in power that long.

J. O. B.

INSPIRING CONFERENCE IN U.S.A.

Report of Our Fraternal Delegate

As a delegate from the Socialist Party of Great Britain I attended the Conference of the World Socialist Party of the United States on August 31st and September 1st, and subsequently visited Detroit, Winnipeg and New York.

The Conference was attended by about 30 members and sympathisers, many of whom had made a long journey to get there. One had come over 3,000 miles from Los Angeles, three about 800 miles from Detroit, and four about 200 miles from New York. This is an example of the difficulty our comrades in America are faced with owing to the scattered nature of the member-

ship in such a large country. Some who wished to attend were unable to do so owing to the distance from Boston and the time they would have had to take off from work.

The proposals, ideas, arguments and general discussion were almost identical with what takes place at our own conferences, and was a striking example of how parties based on the same principles react in a similar way to conditions that are largely the same.

On the evening of the first day a social was held, which was attended by about fifty members and friends. At the social films of activities were shown and the recordings from groups in different parts of the world. This

was a very inspiring part of the Conference, and an indication of the genuine international character of our movement. Recordings came from Los Angeles, San Francisco, on the west coast of the U.S.A.; from Canada, Australia and London, the latter included a recording of our Austrian comrade. There was also a recording from Ireland, which came too late for the Conference, but was heard afterwards, and also a cable with greetings from Iceland.

The recordings were a considerable advance upon the customary cables of greetings. To me it was very heartening to hear comrades from so many distant places actually speaking to us; particularly when I recognised the voices of two former members of the S.P.G.B. speaking from Australia.

The recordings had such an effect that at the Conference the next day resolutions were passed recommending that recordings should be taken of public and class lectures to be exchanged between parties and branches for their mutual advantage.

On the second day of the Conference there was a dinner in the evening, at which the Conference discussions continued until the room had to be cleared. The next day there was a picnic to a park just outside Boston. After this most of the delegates had to make their way home.

The warmth and comradeship of my reception at the Conference was something I will always remember. Also the work of one of the Boston comrades, who spent most of the first night and the next day transferring the different recordings on to spools so that they could be sent abroad without delay for others to hear.

On Friday morning, September 6th, I went with Comrade Rab to Detroit, taking films and recordings with us. Here again I met the same warm and comradely reception. I spoke at a meeting on Saturday evening, at which there were many questions and a lively discussion. Owing to a misunderstanding, the meeting was not advertised as early as it might have been, and I understood afterwards that some who would have attended learned of it too late to do so. There was another meeting later, in a member's house, to which about 40 turned up. I said a few words and then Comrade-Rab took over. We both answered questions.

While in Detroit a number of members and friends went for a picnic across the Canadian border to Lake Erie and had a very pleasant time. I was also taken for a trip to the factories and learned that there were about 150 thousand out of employment. Some huge factories had completely closed down, partly due to automation, which requires only one storied buildings, and partly, I was informed, because industry was slowly moving out of Detroit.

On Friday, 13th September, I left for Winnipeg. There I also met the same warm reception I had become familiar with. I arrived after 1 a.m. to find four members waiting to collect me. They took me to the member's house where I was to stay, and I was staggered to find a group waiting up to greet me. After a short time they had to disperse, as most of them were due at work the next day.

On Sunday afternoon I spoke at a meeting. The attendance was not what the members had hoped, but there were over fifty present. There were good questions

and discussions, and a collection that covered the expenses of the meeting and left some over. There was also a good sale of literature.

On the following Wednesday evening I was given ten minutes to address the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council. I had a good reception, and a considerable number of Westerns and SOCIALIST STANDARDS were distributed. It seemed to me, after listening to a political discussion at the council meeting (about 100 delegates were present), that there was good material there for our Canadian comrades to work on.

On Thursday morning, the 19th September, I left for New York, arriving there at 6 p.m. I spoke the same evening at a small meeting that was hurriedly arranged. The next two days I was shown around New York.

On Saturday evening, 21st September, I left for Boston, arriving at midnight. On Sunday night I spoke at a meeting of members and friends at Headquarters, largely giving my impressions of my visit. On Monday night the Boston comrades held a farewell party for me, where I said goodbye to those I had met for such a short and inspiring time. The next morning I left for London.

I would add a few words on my impressions—necessarily scanty.

The standard of living appears to be much higher than in England. Apart from the rush hour in the subways, there is no sign of rush and tear. The cities are cleaner and more open. Even the factory districts I saw are clean and fresh looking compared with European. Boston has a factory, which I only saw by moonlight, that is graceful, set in gardens, and looks like the type we hope to see in the future. In general there is none of the smokiness we see here, and the factories are not crowded together. I was told it is different in Chicago, but I did not see that city. The streets are very wide, and there are special roads for fast moving traffic. The buildings are huge—apart from the skyscrapers—and the shops immense, clean and light. The houses I have been in are charming and mainly built of wood.

All the time I was in the U.S. and Canada the members everywhere could not do too much for me. The hospitality I received was amazing. It was the best time I have ever had in my life. Everywhere I went I was struck with the enthusiasm of members who are ploughing a much harder furrow than we are. They have told me of their intentions to stir things up in the future, and I am convinced that the next member of the party that goes there next year will witness the result of these intentions. I have made many new friends that I will take care to keep contact with, and whom I will always remember with warmth.

Before concluding, I must pay a tribute to the herculean efforts of Comrade Gloss in securing recordings from distant parts and for organising my trip so successfully. Also to Comrade Rab, with whom I spent many cordial and exciting days. With these two and other members and friends I had numerous pleasant and inspiring discussions.

Finally, I must add how valuable I think these interchanges of visits are, and I hope it will be possible for a much larger interchange in the near future. The better we know each other and the more closely knit our international movement is, the faster we will progress towards the end we all have in common.

GILMAC.

HOW WELL IS THE "WELFARE STATE"?

(Continued from September issue).

Painting backgrounds to civilised society's fine facades (backgrounds that invariably turn out to make dismal and sombre sights), merely to show that all is not gold that glitters, and that under varying descriptions like "Welfare State," "Peoples Democracy," "Socialism" or "Communism," the basic conditions of the mass of the people are everywhere of only slightly varying ugliness, is not the only purpose of the Socialist's criticism. He never fails to drive home the incongruity and the stupidity of the contrasts and to insist that the conditions which make for the sombre and dreary picture need not continue in our days of automation and electro-brains; in other words that, contrary to the general view, the ugly background can be wiped out. The ugly picture painted in this series of articles does not, of course, comprise all sectors of modern life. The boasted "undisputed, unalienable and unassailable right and freedom of expression and criticism" in the "free world," for example, is another deception and illusion.

Freedom on this side of the Iron Curtain

Under the sub-title "Two sides of the Iron Curtain" (in the September issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD) we said: "Politically the iron heel of capitalism crushes the critic and the opponent of the powers that be in the East by deportation to forced labour camps, prison or death; in the West by sacking him from his job, and so exposing him to pauperism." A recent occurrence in a Vienna automobile works glaringly proved the truth of our contention, if such proof was at all necessary. Three employees at the factory Gräf & Stift were dismissed because they left the "Socialist Party"—controlled Trade Union, and one of the critics propagated another union. A protest lodged by the three dismissed workers under the existing "anti-terror law" placed the S.P.A. in a very embarrassing situation, but how they manoeuvred themselves out of it is too long and too dirty a story to be told here. Suffice to say that if this can happen in a private firm like G. and St., none of the hundreds of thousands of employees eating the bread of the nationalised enterprises can be under any illusion as to the consequences of foolhardily exercising too openly his or her "undisputed and unassailable" right to freedom of expression and criticism of the powers that be. Since leaders and functionaries of the "Socialist Party of Austria" are now holding about half the key positions in the State and government (including the office of the State President, the Vice-Chancellor, the Minister of Justice and for Home Affairs, etc., with incomes of from 10 to 40 times that of the average citizen), they are more firmly than ever committed to the service of the capitalist class and exercising executive powers on its behalf.

Further deceptions and illusions, notably in the sphere of ideologies, have previously been dealt with. It was pointed out that the big "Socialist" parties, the Labour Party, and the Russian Communist Party have nothing to do with true scientific Socialism (Communism) save the disgracing and misrepresentation and distortion of the great cause and the particularly impudent and loathsome association of the names and teachings of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels with the monstrous Russian regime and its actions. As an earlier edition of *Contemporary*

Issues put it: "Russia has not the slightest connection with Socialism or Communism, whether in the national or international, ideological or material sense. The nationalisation of the means of production, which (for example, in England) is misrepresented as "Socialism," does not in the least alter the character of the economy as a private profit economy (it remains irrelevant whether it is managed in the interests of the old owners or of a new bureaucracy). It does not overcome a single one of the devastating consequences of the capitalist system, but rather drives these vehemently towards that point where unrestrained Russian barbarism makes manifest the final outcome of capitalist development."

Are You Prosperous?

As we said before, the average foreign visitor to the "fair cities of the world" may see little or nothing of their dismal background, nor may he detect any particular signs of depression on average people's countenances. They may not exactly appear in a mood of desperation, but the overwhelming majority of the people would consider your remarking on their prosperity and happiness as a joke or as trying to pull their leg. And where they profess contentedness, or rather where they do not grouse and grumble or tell their tale of woe, it simply means that they are resigned to, because considering as unalterable, what is, in sober reality, a wretched lot.

In any case, a life of resignation is not one of happiness. Millions of people have learned and are daily learning this bitter truth.

For men and women to see no other way than bearing as unalterable, and eventually getting used to an obviously unsatisfactory and unhappy condition of existence is often a long drawn-out tragedy.

It is quite another thing for men and women to see their way out; i.e., to have free and unstinted access to the glorious possibilities of life (working in free and harmonious association with one's fellow men and women in a world without frontiers and without money) and so seeing their way to escape from, and alter what is or had become an unsatisfactory and unhealthy condition of existence—it has the greatest possible number of elements and chances for enjoying GENUINE HUMAN HAPPINESS.

The Socialist Ideal

The realisation of this latter alternative is the aim of Socialism. To achieve it the present system of society, capitalism must first of all be removed. A Socialist is a person who concentrates his political activity on advocating the abolition of capitalism, to the exclusion of any other scheme or programmes of reforming the present system, and as the only solution for 95 per cent. of the evils of today (poverty, insecurity, universal conflicts and war). Only after the consummation of the social revolution by which the present values and ideology, corresponding to capitalism, will naturally be superseded by the new ideological concepts of Socialism, can the building up of the new social order—Socialism—begin. Then, and then only, shall we all be Socialists. It will, of course, involve the disappearance of all coercive machinery, including the armed forces, police, law courts, judges, prisons, and all things appertaining thereto.

As, after the abolition of the capitalist ownership basis (whether private or state capitalism) in favour of COMMON OWNERSHIP and democratic control of the means of life, there will be no more need for money, no more buying and selling, the commerce in human labour power will also have come to an end. The God Capital, who lives and thrives on this vicious traffic of exploiting the disinherited, will have been killed—the evil spirit

creating universal conflict and the ever present spectre of war will have been exorcised. The impersonal relationships between man and man, their mere business and cash relations will at last become GENUINE HUMAN relationships. Man will have come into his own. A new chapter of history will open. R.

(Concluded).

THE WORLD OF PLENTY?

SOCIALISTS have always said that under this capitalist system the most decisive factor in production is the profit motive, and that production itself is geared to a marketing system that does not take any account of the real social needs of the community. We have said that capitalism channels all men's efforts down the narrow inhibited path of commerce and reduces his vast potentialities in the field of production to within the bounds of profit making. These assertions and the whole tragedy of capitalism and its contradictions are exemplified nowhere with more grim irony than in the problem facing the American Government, the problem of agricultural surpluses, the ever-increasing accumulation of unsold stocks of food in the U.S.A.

To release these huge surpluses on the world's markets would inevitably cause a slump in prices of agricultural commodities, bringing in its wake disaster for the farming community, whose repercussions might extend even to an industrial crisis. From there might ensue a repetition of conditions that existed all over the world in the early 1930's.

Since 1940 production on U.S. farms has increased one-third. This is due largely to the modernisation of farming methods, more machinery, better fertilisers, etc. The world's markets could not consume the increased supplies at the existing prices, so to offset a fall in the prices of farm produce, and prevent large numbers of unemployed in agriculture, the U.S. Government employed a method of buying up all the surplus at subsidised prices.

This was not a great philanthropic gesture on the part of the Government directed towards the farmer. Besides the economic necessity of maintaining stable conditions in agriculture, this policy was also part of a political campaign to woo the vote of the farmer. This is a very important vote, as the agricultural community comprises a very powerful pressure group, and any party that antagonises them can expect at least vastly reduced support, if not electoral death. The policy of subsidising farm products resulted in even greater surpluses, for the subsidy was made flexible and higher prices were paid out in accordance with the success of overseas sales. In view of these price guarantees, even greater over-expansion was caused, with the consequent boosting of production.

These surplus food stocks are not only very costly (five billion dollars a year), but are becoming a great embarrassment to the U.S. Government.

An investigation was made by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation into the advisability of diverting food surpluses to the under-developed countries of the world, but the difficulties arising out of

such a project were found to be so wide and varied that very little was done about any proposals put forward by this organisation.

The American Government, with an eye to increasing its political prestige in Poland during the disturbances there in 1956, made generous offers of help in the way of food supplies to the Polish Government. These offers met with stiff opposition from countries like Canada, who hold the markets in Poland, so this offer had to be withdrawn.

However, the most important effort made by the U.S. Government to reduce these agricultural surpluses was the creation of the Soil Bank in 1956. This is a system whereby farmers are paid to take acreage out of production; e.g., for 1957 the U.S. signed up 233,453 farmers to take 12,784,968 acres of wheat alone out of production in return for \$230,974,475 in payments. This system was to operate over a period of three years.

Ezra Benson, the Secretary of Agriculture, did not want to put this scheme into operation until 1957, but politicians, with an eagle eye on the General Election of November 1956, brought such pressure to bear that he was forced to start making payments to farmers in 1956. The Soil Bank was hailed by the two major political parties as the solution to the farm problem, but they reckoned without the narrow individualism of men in business under capitalism.

In 1956 260 million dollars were paid out to farmers, and the organisation of the Soil Bank was so ineffective that money was even paid out to farmers who had already tried to grow crops on the acres they had donated and failed. Wheat farmers who received payments for taking wheat out of production grew barley or rye instead. In some cases the top soil was sold and the barren ground that was left was put into the Soil Bank. Pasture land was ploughed up and sown with crops. Fertiliser was piled on, and rows sown closer together. The combined result of all this was that in 1956 agricultural production broke all records.

Now let us turn to the desperate need for food that exists among millions of the world's population. The *Agricultural Review* (October 1956) had this to say:—

"Nutritional experts affirm that more than one-half of the world's inhabitants, including many engaged in agriculture itself, are still not getting enough to eat."

While the minimum subsistence level is assessed at 2,200 calories per day, it is stated that 1,166,000,000 people consume less than 2,200 calories. The poverty-ridden countries of India, Pakistan, China and Japan make up the majority of this number, but there are workers in every country suffering from malnutrition, including large numbers working in agriculture itself.

These conditions exist because of the very nature of capitalism itself. There is no question of organising production so as to meet the needs and requirements of humanity. What is needed is a system of society wherein the means of production shall be held in common ownership by all of humanity instead of a privileged few.

Wherein production can be consciously regulated to meet human needs and requirements. Wherein commodities are not produced for sale to the highest bidder, but are produced for the benefit of all mankind. Only in Socialism can there be found the answer to the problems of the working classes of this world. JOAN LAWRENCE.

"THINK OF IT—"

THERE are quite a few millions who have never yet made contact with the Socialist Party of Great Britain, although there are millions who scan the popular Press, in the columns of which the words Socialist, Socialism, Communist and Communism are daily used when commenting on world events.

The important point we emphasise once again is that the popular Press never defines these terms, invariably associated as they are with the Labour Party or the Russian Communist Party. The Socialist Party of Great Britain on the contrary has consistently stressed that the use of these terms has no relation whatsoever to the Socialism which we advocate. We define what we mean by Socialism, and this definition is displayed on all our publications.

"Think of it—!" Also the Socialist Party has likewise persistently pointed out that the Labour and Communist Parties are purely social reform parties. These parties do not advocate Socialism or Communism. Consequently, therefore, we have always opposed their policies as confusion; as a betrayal of working class interests, because only through the establishment of Socialism can emancipation from the wage slavery of Capitalism be accomplished.

But the popular Press voices the interests of the Capitalist property owning class, and by persistently confusing its readers with the use of the words Socialist, Socialism, etc., in relation to the Labour and Russian party policies, they render a signal service to the ruling class.

There are, however, amongst the working class many who do appreciate the distinction which we have so far outlined, but who nevertheless are still unconvinced of the need of associating themselves actively with the work upon which are engaged. To these, therefore, we repeat our appeal to more closely consider our claim. We recall again, therefore, a few of the more outstanding facts concerning our activities down the years.

For instance, this journal has appeared without a break, despite the difficulties of the war years, since 1904. Further, this publication has been supplemented with numerous pamphlets dealing with the more important events and phases of Socialist criticism. In the two world wars, for example, our opposition was clearly and promptly stated, war being the outcome of international rivalry of world capitalism for the domination of the world's markets, trade routes, spheres of influence. This is a very brief record of our efforts to win the working class to Socialism but it has, above everything else, revealed the important value of our Socialist principles, distinguishing us from all other political parties. These principles, guiding the Party towards its Socialist objective, are as sound today as when they were first published; they have been the touchstone which has enabled the Party, through the most critical and testing times, to

declare, without hesitation, its policy in relation to the circumstances and events of those times.

Down the years again, in season and out, our representatives have advocated Socialism as the only alternative to this "thieves' kitchen"—the capitalist system. Times and circumstances have changed, but despite the "Welfare State," in which the working class are being deluded into believing "that all is well now," they are still faced with a constant struggle, through their various industrial organisations, in the attempt to maintain adequate living standards. Slums galore still exist throughout the land, and the constant threat of another world war hovers over their heads like a nightmare.

Today, therefore, we are attempting to contact the working class in various districts through the medium of organised canvassing, and we plead for your sympathetic consideration to the claims of these canvassers to hold your attention for a few moments. In this respect you can render invaluable help, so that possible meetings may be planned in your locality to enable us to state more fully the case for Socialism. "Think of it!" This is all we ask, and having thought, we are convinced that you will soon be wanting to help us in our task.

Finally, the establishment of Socialism is not just a utopian dream, but a commonsense practical proposition. This frustrating cut-throat economic capitalist system which daily haunts working class life can be replaced by a more humane social order, Socialism, in which there will be an opportunity for all to give according to their ability, and to receive according to their need. Beyond this there will open out prospects for each and all to cultivate whatever latent talents they possess, which capitalist exploitation for profit, today denies. No longer will the nation's youth be called upon to engage in senseless fratricidal fighting, but on the contrary inspired to play its part with every member of the community in establishing social relationships whereby the world's populations may live in peaceful harmony.

There are vast and incalculable potential power resources in existence today sufficient to ensure a free, happy and abundant life for the whole human race under the common ownership of such possibilities. "Think of it!" O. C. I.

Correction

In the October issue two lines were transposed in an article "The Big Crocodiles of Fleet Street" on Page 151, the quote commencing on the eighth line second column, should read:—

"The Lodz tram workers, recognising the unfairness of the strike action, resolved to return to work." The Editorial added that the Lodz tram workers let themselves be influenced by irresponsible elements and had put forward unreal demands."

SOCIALISM AND RELIGION

The existence of religion no more proves the existence of God than does the existence of the rainbow. In the debate I stated that without God's existence miracles could not occur, prayer would be useless, after life impossible, and the Bible neither holy nor inspired. My opponent agreed to all this and nodded approvingly. Therefore, I continued, since everything depends on God's existence, it is incumbent on you to prove it, for we Socialists deny it. One cannot prove God's existence by pointing to religious paraphernalia, for there are religions without a personal God, and dozens of gods of a kind who have neither a religion associated with them nor followers who pray to them.

The four quotations from the Bible given by PEN will answer anybody who wants to resurrect the Jesus myth. Not only did Christ say that he came not to bring peace but a sword, but kept his word in this respect (which is more than he did about his return), but the sword has been wet with religious and Christian blood ever since. Socialism does not need this contradictory fantastic rubbish, which is the product of primitive man's childhood.

H. JARVIS.

* * *

N.W.2.

Dear Comrades,—If I may make some observations on Comrade Wilmott's article in last month's SOCIALIST STANDARD, it occurs to me that the main problem to deal with in analysing the approach of people such as Burnham is to isolate the focal point of their approach to present-day society. What exactly is it they regard as the determining factor which makes society capitalist? My experience has been that all judgments seem to be made on the organisation at the top: Who owns? Who controls? Who manages, etc., and how? The position of the working class in all this is apparently of little consequence. It never occurs to them to base their judgments on the totality of social relationships and the basic common factors. The question "what is capitalism?" is that answered from one standpoint, but by laying bare the mechanism as a whole. The arrangement of the working parts may vary, but we are able to recognise in each case the same machine, with the same function. I. D. JONES.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS at HEAD OFFICE

Documentary Films followed by brief Socialist comments at H.Q.

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, S.W.4.
(near Clapham North Tube Station)

Every Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting is then open for questions and discussion which can be continued in the Social Room afterwards when light refreshments will be on sale. Visitors particularly welcome.

Nov. 3rd "The Londoners"—V. PHILLIPS.
" 10th "World of Plenty"—A. FAHY
" 17th "Views on Trial"—A. IVIMEY.
" 24th "Christianity"—H. JARVIS.
Dec. 1st "Gold Coast Votes"—J. D'ARCY.
" 8th "They Gave him the Works"—J. EDMUNDS.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ... 3.30—5 p.m.
East Street
(Walworth) Nov. 3rd 11 a.m.
" 10th 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.
" 17th 12 noon
" 24th 12 noon
Dec. 1st 1 p.m.
Whitstone Pond
(Hampstead) ... 11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Finsbury Pavement ... Tuesdays
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Benzie Road, Dundee.

EDINBURGH. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh.

MANCHESTER Sec.: J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. Phone: DIDSbury 5709.

OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

REDBILL AND REIGATE DISTRICT—C. E. Smith, 88, Chart Lane, Reigate Surrey.

SWANSEA—Enquiries to V. Brain, 17, Bryn a Wellon Rd., Pencuolgi, Nr. Llanelly

HACKNEY BRANCH — ECONOMICS CLASS

Wednesdays, November 6th and 20th and fortnightly thereafter at 7.30 p.m.

Bethnal Green Town Hall, E.2.

Tutors: W. Read and E. Wilmott.

PUBLIC DEBATE

"Which Party Should the Working Class Support
—The Union Movement or The Socialist Party of
Great Britain?"

Speakers: S.P.G.B.—J. D'Arcy
Union Movement—E. J. Ham

LAMBETH TOWN HALL

Monday, November 4th at 7.30 p.m.

Admission Free

LETTERS FROM READERS INVITED

Our Annual Conference in April decided that a section of the SOCIALIST STANDARD be reserved for letters from readers as a regular feature. Readers are invited to send letters of comment and criticism and questions for answer. Letters should be kept as short as possible as space is limited, and the shorter the letters the larger the number that can be printed. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

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BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (Nov. 7th and 21st) at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: S. Roope, 42, Avalon Road, Orpington, Kent.

EALING Fridays at 8 p.m. sharp. Weekly at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o. H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. E. A. Darrook, 51, Plant St., Glasgow, E.1. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (Nov. 6th and 20th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays (Oct. 14th and 28th) at 8 p.m. at Partick Burgh Halls, Partick. Communications to T. Darcy, 3, Armadale Street, Glasgow, E.1.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., at Bethnal Green Town Hall (Patriot Square entrance). Sec.: A. H. Wood, 84, Millfield Ave., Walthamstow, E.17.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m., Nov. 6th and 20th, 108c, Goldhurst Terrace, (near) Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after branch business. J. Doherty, 36, Finsbury Park Road, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 17, Cotswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. Enquiries to Sec. J. G. Grisley, at that address.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary S. Hills, 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae," Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, P. Itham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

ISLINGTON BRANCH MEETINGS

at

CO-OP HALL, 129, SEVEN SISTERS ROAD, N.7

THURSDAYS at 8 p.m.

November 7th "The American Working Class
Movement" — A. IVIMEY.

" 21st "Is Capitalism Heading for another
Crisis" — E. WILMOTT.

Admission Free.

Questions and Discussion.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

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No. 640 Vol. 53 December, 1957

ON UNDERSTANDING
RUSSIA:—THE SOCIALIST
CASE VINDICATED

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THE MANAGERIAL SOCIETY

THE SOLDIER AND
THE ACCOUNTANT

ODDS AND ENDS

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

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Sputnik Lunacy

LET'S LIVE ON THE EARTH FIRST!

THE TALL HEADLINES MISSED THE POINT. When the first satellites circled the earth and the prospects of moon-travel were transformed suddenly to near-actuality, nobody was really surprised. The great majority of us had known it all our lives; and if there was disappointment that the initial flight was not by a square-jawed Dan Dare scientist with a beautiful blonde assistant, it was offset by the thought that someone had, after all, shown merely ignorance when he raised Cain over "Journey to Mars" and "Astounding Stories."

Most commentators—the twelve prominent people who gave their views to the *Sunday Graphic*, for example,—are agreed that the Sputniks are harbingers of a

PRICE OF THE "SOCIALIST STANDARD"

We regret that the continuing heavy loss on the "Socialist Standard" has made it necessary to increase the price to 6d., starting in January, 1958, a decision to that effect having been made by the Party membership. A loss has been incurred for many years, and with the increase of costs for paper and printing the loss became greater than our financial resources could go on carrying without serious interference with other propaganda activities. Unlike most journals, we have no income from advertisements to compensate for higher costs.

new era. What has not emerged at all is any explanation of how or why. Nobody seems to know, in fact, what purpose Sputniks serve, or what would be achieved by connecting with the moon. *The Observer's* science writer, John Davy, discussed possible Russian motives in a main article on November 10th without coming to any conclusion. Guided missiles? But they are wanted for earthly, not lunar, purposes. Scientific curiosity? But the scientists know that nothing lives on the moon (though a *Boy's Magazine* serial, 1934, stuck out strongly for giant spiders carrying electro-magnets).

Or is it simply adventure, man eager to achieve something for its own sake—striving to climb Mount Everest when there is nothing to do afterwards but climb down again? A fine thought; but it is hard to see governments paying on such a scale just for that. According to John Davy, "rocketry is always staggeringly costly. To test-fire one intermediate-range ballistic missile (puny by Sputnik II standards) costs \$6 million. Simply to run the missile testing range in Florida costs \$25,000 an hour. The United States is already spending over \$1,000 million a year on long-range ballistic missiles alone. But all this will be a flea-bite compared with

the cost of launching a manned expedition to the moon." In any case, the space-adventure writers of boyhood knew better. Their rockets were never propelled for science's sake or by lust for excitement. They went to battle with the invaders from Jupiter, to safeguard trade routes in Space, to frustrate a dozen kinds of inter-planetary imperialism. Most people see only too plainly, having made the expected obeisance to the marvels of science, that the marvels of science in recent years have tended one way more than any other: whatever the potentialities of the Sputnik experiments, their origins were and are in the stupendous race for destructive missiles between America and Russia.

The sound made by the Sputniks is, in fact, not of man triumphant over nature but of one nation gaining prestige against another. Nobody knows whether Sputniks are weapons or not, but that isn't the point anyway. The big bangs, the bomb tests and the other push-button horror displays are the nations making muscles, like boys preparing for a fight that each hopes to scare the other out of; and now the Russians have made the biggest muscle of all, the visible proof of incredible technical development.

The implications go farther than to America and Britain. The "uncommitted" nations—i.e., those which have not declared or had to give allegiance to the western powers or to Russia—have to take notice. The Sputniks, flashing in the Russian shop-window, have made the American one suddenly dull by comparison. The conception of Russia as a backward, semi-barbaric nation has been pushed aside for one—equally mistaken—of a great atomic-age civilization. Inevitably the competition has intensified: America now must have satellites at all costs. Did any space-fiction writer envisage a race to the moon?

There is, indeed, kudos to Russia all along the line, most of all because the Anniversary celebrations served to underline the fact that there were only forty years between the fall of the Czars and the launching of the Sputniks. To keep things in perspective, it should be realized that the development of Russia has been only that of a huge nation in the upsurge of capitalist growth. Within the limits of an earlier time, the growth of Britain in the nineteenth century was equally remarkable; or Germany between 1870 and 1914, from a collection of three-halfpenny states to a great power.

Some people have seen the Russian achievement as prestige for State Capitalism—the "planned economy"—as against private enterprise. There is less than nothing to be said for this view. It assumes stupidly that society is to be judged by its machinery; and even if this assumption deserved consideration, the "private enterprise" of America could show more, marvel for marvel and gadget for gadget, than Russia's centralized capitalism. But the real truth is that the pace is made by world capitalism, not by any single nation's genius. American development took up from the point which British capitalism had reached, and Russia from 1917 built on the basis laid by both.

These, however, are not the important questions. Admire if you like the prodigies of science, but ask, please: Will the Sputniks—trip to the moon and all—make man better off? Nobody has proposed any reason for thinking so, and their military and political status causes strong suspicion that they may make him much

worse off. Even leaving this aside, Edward Crankshaw has remarked in *The Observer* that it is "hard to reconcile the gleaming splendours of space travel with the squalid and ramshackle makeshifts which are so much a feature of life in Russia." Not only Russia, however. All over the world, life for most people is a series of makeshifts, more or less ramshackle and more or less squalid.

While the Sputniks circle the earth, old-age pensioners in Britain live as near destitution as anyone did in the nineteenth century. A Sunday paper offers £50,000 to the first man on the moon, and half the population cannot afford to go to the seaside. Man can be kept alive in outer space with pressure-chambers and Caliban-suits, and on the earth he dies from thrombosis and malignancy and no-one can do much about it. And while the rockets go higher and higher, faster and faster, the advice to all of us is to dig holes and prepare to live in them when the radio-active bombs come down.

The only criterion of civilizations is the extent to which they satisfy the needs of people living in them. By that standard, ours fails almost completely. The great majority of people in our society—including America and Russia—are insufficiently fed and clothed, inadequately housed, their ordinary human needs not met. It is not just due to mischance or maldistribution, that the technical means to solve the problems have been created and misapplied: the fact is that industrial capitalism throughout its history has failed and is still failing to produce enough from the world to satisfy the needs of most people living within it.

Nor is that all the indictment. To inadequacy is added outrage—a thousand outrages against man. Man undignified by labour, man turned unsocial by denial of his needs, man on his knees to money; man maimed and killed in millions in a million grotesque ways; today man in fear, Frankenstein shrinking from his own atomic monster.

That is the face of capitalism. The Sputniks are augers of no new era, but fresh symbols of one which is only too long-standing and familiar. There is very little indeed to shout about in the solving of ballistic problems when the great problems of humanity remain unsolved and the need for their solution grows more urgent every day. Suppose that a few men do attain the moon with no belligerent purpose: for most people nothing will be added and nothing taken away. It will, in fact remain space-fiction, transferred from *Astounding Stories* to the *Daily Mail*. But, in any case, the moon is barren. The world, on the other hand, is full of good things for man when he changes the way he lives in it: much simpler, and much more sensible.

Would not man still hanker to reach the moon in a better-organized society? Possibly, and possibly not. Ambition for a bigger share, when it disappears, may be replaced by ambition for experience and finding-out. What is certain is that, when he is able to be sane again, man will concern himself first with this planet and having things on it as they ought to be. Indeed, he may even be content to talk and laugh and only look at the moon a quarter-million miles away, knowing that he—and everybody else—really lived that day.

Should not something be said about the dog? Indeed, yes. It has gone on long enough, especially after

(Continued on page 191)

NOTES BY THE WAY

"Simple Chaps and Plain Blunt Fellows"

Professional politicians and salesmen have something in common, they both seek to win your confidence because you have what they want, your votes or your money. There are several well-defined procedures, the "sweep them off their feet"; the charming, "I am your friend"; the "blind them with science"; the frank "putting all my cards on the table"; and finally the "I am a simple chap, a plain blunt fellow."

These procedures all have their uses though the last is perhaps the most seductive—but what happens when two slick salesmen clash, when Greek meets Greek, when politicians in the same line of business of bamboozling the workers about Socialism get together? We now have it recorded by two labour leaders, Bevan and Tom Driberg, chairman of the Labour Party, how that cunning, gangster-politician Khrushchev behaved when he met them. His favourite role is the "plain, blunt man" but he goes through the whole salesmanship course with the greatest gusto.

First we have Mr. Driberg describing an interview with Khrushchev (*Sunday Despatch*, 27/10/57); Mr. Driberg seems to have swallowed the sales talk with his mouth agape. He found Mr. K. to be a man "with the peasant touch," "completely lacking in the suave, diplomatic circuitousness fashionable in the world's Foreign Offices."

And just read this:—

"... He looked straight into my eyes, lowered his strong voice almost to a whisper, and said with great intensity: 'I assure you of this—I give you my promise, on my word of honour as a man, on my word of honour as a Communist.'"

Then Bevan (*Evening Standard*, 29/10/57) tells us that "Mr. K. is a simple sort of chap," and "a very outspoken man." Can you beat it? Mr. K. simple! About as simple as Mr. Bevan's forerunner; the Welsh Wizard, the late Lloyd George. Khrushchev actually demonstrated his "outspokenness" by the lark of telling Bevan things "in confidence"; as if a politician, sane and sober, would disclose to a rival any secret more important than the time of the day, unless he wanted it to be spread around!

Then a third witness comes forward, Miss Rhona Churchill, correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, who met Khrushchev at a Moscow party in the Turkish Embassy. Here Mr. K. excelled himself; after having fixed the "hypnotic eye" on Driberg he extended the "magnetic hand" to Miss Churchill!

"Meeting Mr. Khrushchev was a fantastic experience for me. He held my hand for the whole of the five minutes and went out of his way to be courteous and cordial."

"He has a nice, warm, chubby hand—and he made no effort to halt the conversation. It ended only because the Turkish Ambassador came up to him."—(*Daily Mail*, 30/10/57.)

All we need now is for Khrushchev to tell us how he met the simple, chubby-handed Nye, plain blunt Tom and peasant Rhona.

Housing as a Social Service

Under Socialism the free provision of housing (like everything else) would be a "social service." Is it really fantastic to consider such a proposition? Everyone needs

somewhere to live. Everyone wants the place where he lives to be fit to live in. Is there any reason why this should not happen? The materials, the land and the labour are all there and would be available for housing. It is capitalism, not inability to build enough decent houses, that limits the supply. It is capitalism that makes housing, like everything else, available on the basis of what you can afford to pay, and which necessitates waste of building capacity on the demands of capitalism's armaments and war.

Of course the Labour Party also talks of making housing a "social service" but what they mean by this is not Socialism but a useless modification of private capitalism under which the private landlord is replaced by the local authority or the government. This does not mean the end of rents and landlords and profit-making but merely a change of form.

The further buying up of houses, proposed by the Labour Party, would not in any way end capitalism but would add to the already enormous amounts of local government loans which serve to increase opportunities for investors to make money. Already the amount outstanding is £3,000 million.

Mr. Mitchison, M.P., the Labour Party spokesman on housing questions, told about his Party's plans at the annual conference of the National Housing and Town Planning Council at Harrogate in October. One of his proposals was that housing subsidies would be continued to enable rents to be kept below their economic level. Surely this at least would be an advantage to the tenant? But don't go too fast. Mr. Mitchison gave his reason, the one that has been behind all the Labour and Tory schemes for subsidised housing and controlled rents during the past 40 years. The purpose was, and was declared to be, to keep wages down.

As Mr. Mitchison put it:—

"He thought that subsidies would continue to be required. To put everything on to rent would be to provoke inflationary wage demands."—(*Manchester Guardian*, 26/10/57.)

He and other Labour M.P.s elaborated on this in the debate in the House of Commons on November 11, 1957. Their main case was not that higher rents will make the workers worse off but that higher rents will lead to higher wages. They are not exactly consistent even on this because the Labour Party's own scheme also involves increasing the rents of the houses to be taken over by the Local Authorities and put into repair.

And here is an interesting news item that needs no comment:—

"The three Labour members for the Heaton Lane Ward of Stockport Town Council have been expelled from Stockport Labour Party because they voted against their party's proposals to increase the rents of Council houses."—(*Manchester Guardian*, 4/10/57.)

Bad Housing in Russia

Also in State capitalist Russia housing is falsely described as a "social service." In effect the Russian government has already done what the British Labour Party proposes to do, take housing out of the hands of private capitalists for the state to own and operate it. And what housing! Earlier this year a delegation from the National Union of Mineworkers went to Russia and

their report dealt, among other things, with housing.

"It [the Report] says that 'shacks and indescribably bad housing conditions' are still being removed in the Soviet Union, and that in the mining area an average of 16 people are housed in a living space equal to a British Council house. Even the new flats and houses are very much inferior to anything acceptable in Britain, and are often one storey buildings very little larger than 'a one-car garage'."

"While praising the 'community buildings,' the report states that these do not compensate for the housing of up to two families in one room, for the absence of streets and pavements, nor for the isolation caused by the absence of transport between towns and communities."—(*Manchester Guardian*, 15/3/1957.)

Just to get the record clear we are assured that the simple, unassuming Khrushchev is not so simple as to live in one of these garage-size houses. He leaves this to those simpletons, the working class.

Mr. Mikardo is at it again

Mr. Ian Mikardo, Labour M.P. for Reading, has been to Ghana to see how things are; because before he went he was worried about his old friend Nkrumah. There is, he says, nothing to worry about.

"I can only tell you that it looks very different when you go there and see it for yourself instead of reading it in a semi-hysterical despatch written by a British pressman—and written, mark you, not from Accra, but from Lagos."—(*Tribune*, 1st November, 1957.)

Now Mr. Mikardo may happen to be right; it may be "that the country is quieter, more peaceful, less tense, less violent than it has been for a very long time"; but you would be very unwise to accept what Mr. Mikardo sees as evidence. Why do we say this? Because Mr. Mikardo has done some travelling and reporting before. In 1954 he went to Hungary and there, too, he found that things weren't a bit like the descriptions he had read in the British Press. And, as he said, "Old Mikardo isn't an easy guy to kid at any time anyway." (*Tribune*, 17/9/54.) Then two years later Hungary blew up and disproved every conclusion Mr. Mikardo reached.

The Liberals and Freedom of the Individual

The Liberals make great play of their alleged unique interest in "personal freedom," protecting the individual against bureaucracy and so on. Well they had a chance to show what they mean over the practice of opening letters and tapping telephones. And what do they say? As throughout the 19th century, Liberal governments went in for letter opening, they can't say very much and instead of now coming out flat for the abolition of these practices they line up with the Tories and Labourites, and merely want it to be lessened.

One of the members of the committee which recommends the continuance of phone-tapping "under safeguards" is Sir Norman Birkett, former Liberal M.P., an the Liberal *Manchester Guardian* thinks the committee "has done a valuable service" in that it has "redefined the conditions in which tapping is permissible." (*Manchester Guardian*, 1/11/57.) While the *News Chronicle* also calls the government's acceptance of the recommendations "good news."

The Liberals are like that. They used to be utterly opposed to conscription until they supported it.

It's warmer inside

Earl Attlee, like his Party, used to be all for the abolition of the House of Lords but told his fellow peers

on 31 October that he now finds that "it works" and he is in favour of keeping a second chamber. But he wants it reformed.

He also wants the Lords to have more pay. "The present proposals for payment would not be sufficient to attract full-time men." (*Manchester Guardian*, 1/11/57.)

Lord Glasgow did not think the hereditary principle should be abolished (Earl Attlee does), and said:—

"Now your Lordships are paid for attendance there should be no difficulty whatsoever to get persons of Left-wing views to accept hereditary peerages."

A long while ago (about the same time that the Labourites were for abolishing the Lords), some of them in a rather muddled way were also for abolishing capitalism. Now they find it so much nicer to "get inside" through State ownership of company shares. With luck this may mean a lot of government-nominated directorships "for the boys."

Perhaps all of this is what the erstwhile "left-wingers" meant by the old tactic of "boring from within."

"How to live without working"

Under the above heading the *Daily Herald* (30/10/57) reports a manoeuvre by which separated couples can get money from the Assistance authorities and not pay it back. The authorities are going to investigate and plug this loophole in the law.

A few days later the *Sunday Express* (3/11/57) drew attention to another way to live without working—it is to be a millionaire. They published a lengthy list with details. And if you want to know how to be a millionaire the *Express* tells you. It is best to start "with the advantage of a millionaire father."

Among the lucky ones who did this is Lord Ellerman. He inherited £18 million from his father in 1933 but his shipping and property investments "have prospered so mightily since the war that his fortune today may be close to £50 million."

He and other property owners, not merely the millionaires, were adding to their fortunes under the Labour Government, not by working but by the perfectly legal method inherent in capitalism of getting unpaid labour out of the working class, from the difference between what the workers receive and what they produce. Neither the *Express* nor the *Herald* is going to stop that method of living without working.

Dazzling Driberg

Mr. Tom Driberg, Labour Party Chairman, is simply terrific as a ferreter out of deeply hidden secrets. After six years concentrated study of the work of the Labour government which went out of office in 1951 he reveals the sensational truth about the previous six years, during which the Labour Party administered British capitalism:—

"Britain has not really known Socialism—even though there was a Labour Government for six very difficult post-war years."—(*Daily Herald*, 9/11/57.)

What will he discover next?

"A Sort of Socialism" in Russia?

It is dawning on some of the less hidebound politicians and journalists that what the Western world

faces in Russia is not militant communism but militant capitalism. Their approach to understanding is very slow and rather muddled but we must be patient and charitable with these bold spirits who so daringly begin to catch up with what the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* was saying nearly 40 years ago.

One of the commentators is Edward Crankshaw, who wrote in the *Observer* (3 November, 1957), about the celebrations going on in Moscow in November:—

"What they are celebrating, in fact, is the birth of Russia as a modern great Power, equipped with a formidable bourgeois ruling class, a subservient intelligentsia, and a subordinated proletariat of a kind which Marx would have

recognised."

Then, having painfully struggled to the above half-recognition of what Russia is Mr. Crankshaw utters this inanity:—

"The Russians, while in no mood for anything but a Socialist society of sorts are beginning to question how much real Socialism they in fact have."

One wonders whether Mr. Crankshaw writes so sloppily because he thinks sloppily or for some other reason. Anyway let us put him right by saying that what Russia has is State capitalism, not Socialism, and capitalism is not "a sort of Socialism" and Socialism is not "a sort of Capitalism." H.

THE MANAGERIAL SOCIETY

Part Two

THE Managerial Society is now part of popular mythology. Even in Marx's time it seems to have been a commonplace, for he quotes Dr. Ure as saying in 1840, that not the industrial capitalists but the industrial managers "are the soul of our industrial system." (*Capital*, vol. 3, pp. 454/5).

It is of course true as the managerial theorists say that the unity between owners of capital and the actual direction of production has been ruptured. In fact Marx himself acutely analysed in the third volume of *Capital* the reasons for this and showed it to be intimately bound up with the concentration of capital (the continuous enlargement of the productive units) and the centralisation of capital (the amalgamation of a number of smaller capitals into a single capital). The centralisation of capital was considerably helped by the tremendous growth of the credit system and with it the emergence of the joint stock company.

When Marx speaks of the credit system he includes the whole financial machinery of capitalism, i.e., banks, finance houses, security markets, etc. It is via the credit system that scattered capitals can be deposited in vast amounts and made available for large scale capital investment. In this way said Marx it "transforms itself into an immense social mechanism for the centralisation of capital."

The Absentee Capitalist

Joint stock companies (corporations) operate not merely with their own capital but other peoples. Of them Marx says, "Capital . . . is here directly endowed with the form of social capital . . . as distinguished from private capital and assumes the form of social enterprise as distinguished from private enterprise. It is the abolition of capital as private property within the boundaries of capitalist production itself." Marx adds, that it leads to the "transformation of the actually functioning capitalist into a mere manager, and administrator of other peoples capital and the owners of capital . . . into mere money capitalists." (*Capital*, vol. 3, pp. 516/17.)

Marx, unlike our modern theorists, did not believe the development of the corporation to be a step towards Socialism. Collective capital, he said, although it gave impetus to the social character of wealth production could never overcome, but only intensify the antagonism of socially produced wealth and private appropriation. He also added that the development of the corporation and

the credit system, brings a new set of parasites . . . promoters, speculators: a whole system of swindling by means of corporation juggling, stock jobbing and stock speculation. It is private production without the control of private property. (*Capital*, vol. 3, p. 519.)

The hired managers

Marx also dealt with the replacement of the capitalists as industrial *entrepreneurs* by managers. The early capitalists, while not producing surplus value, supervised the activities of those who did. This appropriation of unpaid labour was called the profits of enterprise. The economic apologists of the day also called it the wages of superintendence. With the vast growth of capitalism the function of the capitalist as a representative of capital became delegated to managers, whose wages of superintendence was fixed at the market price and was but a mere fraction of what the capitalist had appropriated for such work. Managers are then agents for the capitalists and hence agents for capital.

The so-called Middle Class

Managers constitute the elite of the amorphous mass called by some people the new "middle class." It includes civil servants, professional workers, office staff, salesmen, etc. They are also known as the salariat. The requirement of large scale capitalism has brought about a considerable increase of these types of employees. Labourites and Tories have claimed that the growth of this group of the working population has falsified Marx's prediction of the decline of the middle class. When Marx spoke of the decline of the "petty bourgeoisie" he was referring to independent handicraftsmen, small traders and those living on small fixed incomes. This prediction holds good. Such people constitute small property owners. The salariat are not an expanded form of these lower sections of the historic bourgeoisie. This "new middle class" is in substance not a property section but a propertyless section of the community, forced to work for a livelihood. The term middle class is not based upon an objective evaluation of the position of individuals in the economic structure of society but on a subjective assessment of one's occupation, residence, and "The census of classification of occupations (1951)" general cultural qualifications.

ignored these finer nuances by classifying sections of the working population as industrial and non-industrial. The

census also tells us that in this country there are approximately 750,000 managers. Of these 185,000 are termed general managers and directors. Some of these directors will have been appointed to boards of concerns as top ranking technicians, administrators or because they have big names and influence. Some of these directors will be big stock holders who have got themselves appointed with the additional advantages of expense accounts. The general managers for the most part are not substantial shareholders—what ever they hope to become. It is these with the overwhelming bulk of managers the 700,000 or so who are under orders for the concerns for which they work. As such they are representatives of the capitalists, operating in a capitalist environment and working for capitalist objectives. As such they do not form a separate class with aims and economic interests different and in opposition to those who employ them. It is these, along with the highly placed technicians, who constitute the hard core of Burnham's and the new look Fabian's alleged managerial class, who they claim have replaced, or are in process of so doing, the capitalist class.

What is a Class?

Having used the term "class" in the context it is perhaps necessary to define it more precisely. In the first place a class is not merely a question of social origins. An individual born in the working class may enter the capitalist class and vice versa. Nevertheless a class tends to perpetuate itself along the lines of its social origins. It is also true that individuals are influenced by the ideas and attitudes of the class to which they belong. But ideas and attitudes do not determine a class structure.

Nor as is popularly supposed is a class made up of people getting near enough the same income. Some highly paid workers may get as much or more than some small capitalists. It does not mean therefore that they have an identity of interests. A civil servant and an aircraft mechanic may both earn £1,000 per year but it does not give them a class affiliation as against those who earn double or half of that amount. Although differences of income are a feature of classes, it is not the size of the income but the source of income, common to a number of individuals which is more important for the purpose of analysis. But to say no more than this would leave the question up in the air.

To discover the real nature of class structure one must go to the roots of a social system and that must be sought in the social relations of production i.e. the way one set of individuals stand to another set of individuals in the process of producing wealth. Using this criterion we can say that social classes are characterised by those who own the means of production and those who work for them and who provide above the general cost of their maintenance, surplus labour for the former. The appropriation of surplus labour has always exemplified class society of which capitalism is historically the last form. In capitalism the social groups consist of the ruling section who own the wealth producing agencies and the subordinate class—non-owners—who work for them and the surplus labour takes the form of surplus value. The essence of class privilege being the appropriation of unpaid labour, the individuals who make up the ruling section will have a common interest in perpetuating a social order upon which the survival of its privileges depends. An antagonism of interests is then a feature of class society.

It is true that people can be classified in innumerable ways, dependent upon the purpose in view. But if we wish to know from whence profits are derived, what determines wage levels and the impetus of capital accumulation, in short what makes the system tick, then only the Marxist classification is relevant for such purposes.

Production of surplus value is the life blood of capitalism. It provides capitalists with their personal incomes and is the source of extended capital accumulation. In a society in which two classes face each other as owners of the means of production and wage workers owning only their working capacities the way control is exercised over the agencies of production is evident. That is why capital is not just another name for means of production, as some woollyminded Fabians think. For the capitalist the means of production represent a sum of values which take the form of investment. The capitalist is not concerned with means of production as such, but as capital and the only function capital has for him is to expand.

Expand or go under

In a world where monopolistic, quasi monopolistic, or free market competition is the order of the day (plus capital depreciation due to technical changes which tend to depreciate capital values) the self-expansion of capital becomes the essential condition for successful survival of the capitalist or combination of capitalists. Capitalism is a social organisation where production and distribution of wealth has to follow certain rules. Capitalists, and the management, must conform to these rules on pain of elimination. Because capitalism was bound up with and the outcome of a past economic evolution, it constitutes a definite stage of historic development. For that reason the aims and motives of capitalists are proscribed within the social framework. Not for nothing did Marx state that his view "can less than any other make the individual responsible for relations whose creature he socially remains, however much he may subjectively raise himself above them."

If production of surplus value and the self-expansion of capital are the dominant drives of the system, then whether capitalists run their own concerns or have them run by managers they must both act as functionaries of capital. And whatever other motives, capitalists or managers may or may not bring to the direction of enterprises they are all subordinate to the over-riding compulsion of the self-expansion of capital in a profit motivated economy. If they are not successful in capital accumulation they cannot be successful in anything.

Having defined a class as the position individuals occupy in the economic structure of society in relation to other individuals, i.e., as owners and non-owners of the means of production it may be asked in what way do managers constitute a class. In what way do they stand to the relations of production in contrast to the owning class and the non-owning class. What economic function—not occupational or technical—have they separate from employers and employees? What objectives do they pursue which are not capitalist objectives and what is the system they are supposed to be operating which is neither capitalist or socialist? It is precisely on such issues, crucial to the claims of the managerial theorists that they become vague, and even obscurantists.

The Place of the Technician

There is a variation of the managerial theme which holds that the complex character of automation will produce a race of technicians upon whom the capitalists will be so utterly dependent that they and the managers will be able to hold the big capital owners to ransom and impose their own terms upon the system. In substance these arguments were put forward by technocrats thirty years ago. They argued that the ever-growing complex technical evolution of the system would result in the power of control passing to technicians and administrators, who would be small and compact enough to hold the capitalists to ransom. Experience shows, however, that the technical requirements of capitalism have never failed in the long run to bring about a generous, sometimes over-generous supply of necessary technicians, and there is no reason to suppose that automation technicians either now or in the future will not be as liberally forthcoming as they have been in the past.

The Bureaucracy

To the structure of this alleged new ruling class there has been added another component, the bureaucrats. Although what role they are supposed to play in the economy and in what manner they fuse with the managers, is never made concretely clear. Hitler's Germany is often used as the classic example of managers, bureaucrats and political adventurers usurping the capitalist ruling class. But as was pointed out in a previous article on the "managerial revolution" there was never the slightest evidence to show that an economy other than capitalism had emerged or was emerging under the Fascist regime. It is true that the development of what is known as Monopoly Capitalism has been linked with the expansion of the economic functions of the state which in turn has engendered close contacts between the organisations of big business, chambers of commerce, etc., and the various state departments. Again large scale State investment for the provision of cheap raw material

and essential services for the economy as a whole has brought about an interlocking between parts of the state apparatus and industry. All of which reflects itself in capitalist parliaments and governmental policies. But this has not led to the elimination of the capitalist economy, nor has it led to its undermining but rather to its underpinning.

But even if the assumption was granted—and there is not any evidence for so doing—that managers, top ranking technicians, and boards of directors have displaced or will displace the big capital owners, does it follow that they constitute a new ruling class? Having defined class within the context of the subject, we have seen that a class is not merely a set of people organised around certain interests but a group of individuals who occupy a certain position in the economic structure of society, and so stand in certain relationship to another group in a specific mode of production. And the ruling group are those who via ownership are able to exercise control of the means of production. In what way then would managers who ousted the former owners constitute a new ruling class. The answer is that they would not. The social productive relations would remain unaltered. The essential features of the capitalist economy would remain and the production of surplus value and extended accumulation of capital would still be the dominant motives of those who now occupied the leading positions in the economy. In short they would still function as representatives of capital. It would still be the ruling class as we have defined it. All that it would mean is that the dominant section would be made up of different persons, and no more significant in fundamental change than the replacement of Jewish capitalists by Aryan capitalists. On such slender threads rests the grandiose assumptions of the managerial theorists. The claims put forward by Labourites and Tories on behalf of managerial society are rooted in political and propaganda purposes rather than in genuine investigation. But this and other matter must remain the subject of another article.

E.W.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From the SOCIALIST STANDARD, December, 1907)

Socialism and Social Reform

There are many people who regard Socialism merely as a demand for Social Reform, as a device on the part of certain sections of the community for better conditions of labour and living for the working class. This misconception is largely due to organisations claiming to be "Socialist" but devoting their energies to the propagation of reforms, whereby the real issue is obscured, the sympathies of the kind-hearted are aroused and, at election times, the support and votes of those who know nothing of Socialism, but believe in some particular "ameliorative" measure, are received. . . .

It was, therefore, refreshing to read Mr. Balfour's speech at Birmingham on November 14. In truth, he said, there is no difficulty or ambiguity about the subject at all. Socialism has one meaning and one meaning alone. Socialism means and can mean nothing else than

that the community . . . is to take all the means of production into its own hands, that private property and private enterprise are to come to an end and all that private enterprise and private property carry with them. . . .

In discussing the difference between Socialism and Social Reform, he said: Social Reform is when the State, based upon private enterprise, based upon private property, recognising that the best productive results can only be obtained by respecting private property and encouraging private enterprise, asks them to contribute towards great national and public objects.

It is easy therefore to understand why those who are opposed to Socialism advocate social reform, but it is inexplicable why those who claim to be out for Socialism should, by their advocacy of social reform, help the master class to maintain their supremacy, and side-track the workers from the only cause that can emancipate them: the cause of Revolutionary Socialism.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

DECEMBER



1957

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for THE SOCIALIST STANDARD should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; phone MAC 3811. Orders for literature to Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

ON UNDERSTANDING RUSSIA— The Socialist Case Vindicated

IN March, 1917 the Russian Czarist autocracy collapsed under the strain of war. Nine months later the Russian Communist Party seized power. Its leaders, Lenin and Trotsky, proclaimed the intention of establishing Socialism. Now forty years have passed and the occasion has been used by *The Times* to attempt an assessment of the achievements of the Communist regime. (*Times*, 25 October, 1957.) The *Times* "Leader," "Forty Years On," deserves study; not for its insight into what has happened in Russia but as evidence of the poverty of thought among the spokesmen of the British ruling class.

Not that the *Times* underestimates the military and industrial strength of Russia—as so many observers did for many years. Now it soberly records that Russia is the "second greatest industrial Power and probably the strongest militarily" in the world. And we need not dissent from the claim concerning "the growing impact of the Soviet Union, as a State, in the Middle East and Asia: the growth and diligence of Communist parties—all these forces have shaped the world, and no one can say that they have reached their peak."

But the chief concern of the anonymous *Leader* writer is to explain how and why this happened, and this is the way in which he approaches it:—

"How was it done? The odd thing is that practically nothing happened in the way imagined by Lenin and Trotsky. . . . Their hopes are well known. They believed that the example of the Russian soldiers, peasants and workers . . . would speedily touch off other overwhelming revolutions in Germany, France and Britain. . . . There would be a classless society. Russia and the world have seen how almost every forecast has gone awry."

So almost everything the early Communists set out to do has not been done, it has all gone awry—yet the *Times*, with a logic that is peculiar, calls this a "success story" and asks, "How far does the application of Marxist doctrine explain the Russian success story of today?"

What Marxist doctrine? It was not Marxist doctrine but ignorance of it that led the Russian Communists to hold in 1917 two beliefs that were fantastic: that Socialism could be introduced then in Russia, and that the workers of the West were ripe for Socialist revolution. It was the Marxist S.P.G.B. that alone in this country was pointing out at that time how absurd these notions were. (Readers will find the evidence for this in our pamphlet *Russia Since 1917* which consists of articles taken from the SOCIALIST STANDARD for the years 1915 onwards.)

What has been achieved in Russia is what the Marxist S.P.G.B. foresaw, not Socialism but a great, expanding capitalist State. We were, however, not quite alone in this for Lenin, in a "moment of truth," was telling his bemused fellow members of the Communist Party that they were blind not to see that what Russia needed was "State Capitalism." "Reality says that State capitalism would be a step forward for us; if we were able to bring about State Capitalism in a short time it would be a victory for us." (Lenin, "The Chief Task of Our Times.")

How very odd

How very odd, too, that the erudite *Times* should think it odd that the things vote-catching politicians promise (and sometimes believe) do not happen. Does the *Times* think it "odd" that the France that arose out of the Revolution had very little Liberty, Equality, Fraternity about it? Or odd that the Liberal Government elected in 1910 to preserve peace should have ushered in the war of 1914? Or odd that the Labour Government's confident undertaking to solve unemployment in 1929 should have exploded into the greatest depression in half a century? Or odd that the Labour-Tory pledges in 1945 and 1951 of "no inflation" should jointly have produced a 60 per cent. rise in the cost of living?

Is it any more odd that the Russian Communist Party (whose interest in Communism long ago disappeared) should have thought up the trick of relabelling Lenin's "State Capitalism" as Stalin's "Socialism"? If *The Times* is really surprised at such things it must have a very uninformed idea of how capitalism and capitalist politics work—and indeed so it has. Not for the *Times* to understand that every social system, capitalism among them, has its own structure and development on which the slogans and emotional longings of the governments exercise little permanent influence. Instead, after itself emphasising that Lenin and his associates were powerless to remould Russia on the Socialist lines they said they intended, the writer credits Stalin with having had the power to do exactly what he admits Lenin could not do. He writes: "Gone are the days when Stalin could remould society in a single decree." If Stalin really had that power why did he not remould Russian society by introducing something other than the developing capitalism that was there when he began and there when he died?

But let us probe further into the question asked by

the *Times* writer. He wants to know "how far the application of Marxist doctrine" explains the rise of Russia to its industrial and military eminence. But why ask such an irrelevant question? All the other Powers have followed the same course. British capitalism progressed similarly in the early and mid-nineteenth century, as did American capitalism, German capitalism, French capitalism, and Japanese capitalism later on. Do we have to ask how far these events are to be explained by the application of Marxist doctrine, or Victorian doctrine, or Lutheran doctrine or American Republican doctrine, or Japanese "Son of Heaven" doctrine? They are all to be explained by the development of manufacture, mining, farming, etc. on capitalist lines, after the way had been cleared by the removal from power of classes hostile to the dominance of capitalism. Instead of being misled by the different slogans and doctrines of the leaders the *Times* should observe how similar were the economic and political measures they took to clear the way for the exploitation of a propertyless working class in all these countries, and if the *Times* writer still thinks that Russia's entry into the ranks of the great industrial capitalist Powers is due to "Marxist doctrine" will he tell

us what Marxist doctrine he has in mind? It must be something unknown to Marx.

What of the future? The *Times*, after asserting that Russia and its allies "have much to rejoice in," also notes that the young Russians are not all rejoicing. Some are discontented and "ask whether this is the society for which their fathers fought." To the extent that their fathers shared the illusions of Lenin and Trotsky that Socialism was going to be introduced into Russia, there is only one answer the son's question can elicit. But the end is not yet. Discontent with capitalism can no more be permanently suppressed in Russia than elsewhere in the capitalist world, notwithstanding the efficiency and brutality of the police regime. The late Arnold Bennett writing in 1918, tells of having asked an unnamed historian how long the Russian revolution would endure. The historian (evidently seeing the parallel with the French revolutionary era that produced capitalism in France), told Bennett that he thought the Russian revolution would work itself out in about 40 years. He certainly showed more insight than the *Times*, which understood then even less than it does today about the nature of Russia's capitalist revolution.

A READER'S CHALLENGE ON THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

Dear Comrades,

As many of your Party speakers know, I have been very critical of their presentation of the "Communist Manifesto" when pointing out various quotations from the prefaces. Indeed they have declared that I was untruthful. However I have since discovered that the cause of your speakers' ignorance is due to the fact that they do NOT use the official edition of the "C.M." as approved by the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute of Moscow. Instead they accept the distorted version of the "C.M." under the title "Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years," this latter version does NOT contain the complete prefaces, or even the one written by Engels in 1893.

I would inform you that I purchased a copy of the official edition at your Party meeting held in the Denison Hall on 5/1/1947, yet today your literature sellers declare it to be obsolete. WHY? Is it because it proves the case for the transitional period as advocated by Marx, and is therefore detrimental to the propaganda of your Party? I should like to receive your views on this matter.

H. A. TIMMINS.

REPLY:

(1) Our pamphlet "The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years" contains the manifesto of Marx and Engels, issued in 1848, a preface of Engels written in 1888, and our own survey of the hundred years since 1848.

Mr. Timmins says it is a "distorted version of the Communist Manifesto." So our first challenge to Mr. Timmins is that he should produce evidence of the alleged distortion. We have in fact used the translation of the Manifesto made by Samuel Moore and revised by him and Engels jointly (as Mr. Timmins would see if he looked on page 57). Mr. Timmins' story that it is distorted in some way is pure fabrication.

(2) Mr. Timmins thinks we should use the "official"

edition approved and produced in Moscow. Really Mr. Timmins! Since when has the hallmark of veracity belonged to those notorious re-writers and fakers of history, the Russian Communist Party.

(3) Mr. Timmins wants to know why we did not use the 1893 Preface. The answer is that the 1888 Preface contains a brief but useful explanation of how the Manifesto came to be written, why it was called "Communist" not "Socialist," and how Engels in 1888 viewed various developments.

We did not add the 1893 Preface because it is less useful and because the space available in a pamphlet is limited. (For the same reason we did not use the 1872 Preface, or the 1890 Preface, or the 1892 Preface.)

(4) Mr. Timmins thinks that the 1893 Preface "proves the case for the transitional period as advocated by Marx and is therefore detrimental to the propaganda of your Party."

The S.P.G.B. holds that the essential for the introduction of Socialism (which has nothing in common with Labour Party State Capitalism) is the existence of a Socialist majority which must then obtain control of the machinery of government for the purpose of introducing Socialism. We therefore reject the absurd Labour Party theory that we are already (before the conditions are satisfied) in a transition period between capitalism and Socialism; and we reject the theory that a more or less prolonged transition would be necessary after the conditions have been satisfied. The S.P.G.B. bases its attitude on knowledge of history and of conditions existing in the world and on past experience. While it would be a matter of interest to us if Engels held a different view in 1893 it would not alter the S.P.G.B.'s attitude; we do not have to follow an error of judgment Engels may have fallen into through considering a different set of conditions.

But in truth this is another of Mr. Timmins fabrications. In the 1893 Preface Engels did not deal with the case for regarding the period either before or after Socialist control of the machinery of government as a transition to Socialism. What he did say was that the glee of the capitalists at having come to power against the monarchy and nobility, would be short lived. Engels wrote :—

"Yet nothing is more likely than that they are preparing the way for us, for the democrats and communists: that they will only have a few years wherein to enjoy the fruits of victory and will then be overthrown."

So Engels was not dealing with the "transition" theory at all; and even Mr. Timmins, careless as he is, might have noticed that not "a few years" after 1893, but two-thirds of a century afterwards, capitalism is still firmly entrenched everywhere.

ED. COMM.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

The Propaganda Committee reports well on the series of propaganda meetings held in London, the latest being a debate with the Union Movement at Lambeth Town Hall on November 4th. The audience was well over 150 and the venture was well worth while even though we have debated the Union Movement on many occasions over the years.

Two more debates are being arranged. One with the Socialist Labour Party at Denison House, on Sunday 15th December, and the other with the Peace Pledge Union at the Paddington Branch Rooms (The Laurie Arms) on December 5th. The Sunday Film lectures at Head Office are also going well, a list of the December titles, and full details of the debates mentioned above, are given elsewhere in this issue.

Annual Ballot for the Party Officers and Executive Committee members. Comrades are reminded that in recent ballots the response of members has been very poor. The Party is strengthened and heartened when a representative response is made and it behoves every member to return his or her ballot paper in time for the count. So please Comrades, bear this in mind when you receive your form—fill it in and return it right away, then there will be no chance that it is mislaid or forgotten.



Classes. The Speaker's Class is maintaining good progress and is benefitting from the use of a tape recording machine, a very helpful medium—to be able to hear oneself as others hear us! The Hackney Branch Economics Class is also showing good progress, the next two classes are being held on Wednesdays, December 4th and 18th at Bethnal Green Town Hall.

Ealing Branch are holding their annual Christmas Party, always a happy event and Comrades who wish to spend a really jolly evening in good company and at the same time assist Party funds, should make a note of the date, place and time which is given under the "notices." P.H.

THE SOLDIER AND ACCOUNTANT

"The Bridge on the River Kwai" is a film about the building of a bridge by a campful of British prisoners in Japanese hands during the last war and about the commando expedition to blow it up.

There is a scene set in Ceylon, when the commandos are foregathering to choose the last of the four officers for the adventure. They call in a young Canadian—a Lieutenant Joyce—and the senior officer asks him what he did in peacetime. "Sir," replies the Canadian, "I was an accountant. That is, I was articled to an accountant. I sat all day adding up columns of figures and checking them. Somebody had already checked them before me and somebody checked them again after me." The audience laughed. They were meant to laugh.

CROONERS

The lieutenant was, as they say, on to a good thing, for the stiff collar, stripe pants fuddy duddies sitting in banks and insurance offices and accountants' chambers are easy enough meat for a little fun poking. Even the

crooners have tried their hand at it. "There's nothing," sang Bing Crosby, "Quite as grotesque as a man at a desk, looking outside at the sun!" and went on to ask, "Does he think that he's having fun? Of course, he is not; the man at the desk is merely doing a job which, although humdrum, is very necessary in this highly commercial world. Banks pay their clerks to handle money because society today needs to have it handled. Likewise, the accountant is important (he often gets enough money to be very important). His job is to check a company's books, to make sure that stocks and balance sheets are straight, that nobody is fiddling the guvnors and that the guvnors are not fiddling the shareholders. He is a man with years of training behind him and when he certifies a company balance sheet it is usually accepted without question by the shareholders, for the accountant is generally a man of a high standard of professional probity. (Although a few are not above a shady deal and some spend a lot of time working out ways in which their clients can slip through loopholes in the tax laws.)

Boring

As the young lieutenant pointed out, there is a lot of boring work involved in the accountant's business. Worst of all, perhaps, is what is known as "calling," when a clerk reads off amounts of money from one ledger whilst a companion checks a corresponding entry in another ledger. Articled clerks are doomed to this, day in and day out, for several years. The unlucky ones do not even have the break of travelling around checking the books of different companies, for some are so large that as soon as one check has finished it is time to start another.

The young men who take on this work seem to conform largely to a type. Many have an air of precarious gentility; they sport umbrellas, with the approved cane handle. Often in conversation they hint at a sophistication which is not really there; with better luck, it seems, they might have been doctors or lawyers. That is the clue to it. Many of these fellows have been to fairly expensive schools but their parents could not afford to send them on to university. To people of their background it is essential, often for snob reasons, to "become a member of a profession" as apart from "getting a job." Missing university has meant that law and medicine cannot be considered; the cheap way out of the dilemma is to take out articles to an accountant. (In most parts of England this can be done without putting up any money and the clerk gets some sort of a wage during his period of articled service.) So these young men for several years get an apprentice's pay but unlike the apprentice they cannot make a cheerful display of their penury. Behold them any Saturday evening, drinking bitter in the local Rugby club bar; or any morning on the Tube into the City. Observe the seedy suits and the *Daily Telegraph*, meticulously folded underarm.

Unfair

When Lieutenant Joyce first appears in *The Bridge on the River Kwai* he is hungry for action, eager to do something exciting which he considers socially beneficial. At such times an accountant's job does seem pretty poor

stuff; no wonder Joyce is scornful. But really, the film is unfair. Consider the facts. This is a world where the necessities and luxuries of life are bought and sold, where nothing is made unless it can be sold. Because of all this buying and selling we have money. Because we have money we have banks, with clerks to keep the money flowing smoothly so that wages can be paid and goods exchanged. We have accountants to keep the books and see that nobody gets up to anything; we have policemen for the accountant to call in if anybody is up to anything. We have soldiers like Lieutenant Joyce to fight for the markets where the goods are sold and for the places where they find the raw materials which go to make the goods.

From any sane viewpoint, all these jobs are useless and wasteful; only a social set-up which starts from the underlying stupidity of commodity production could find any use for them. The film, of course, accepts without question the rightness of this set-up and is content to mock just one of capitalism's futile occupations whilst glamourising another.

Madness

After all, if Lieutenant Joyce had survived the expedition and returned to Civvy Street he may have been asked what he had done in the war. "Sir," he may have replied, "I was a soldier. A saboteur. I crawled and sweated through the stinking jungle, fighting disease and picking off leeches, watching my companions die. All this to destroy a bridge; a beautiful bridge, which had cost a lot of pain in the making. But if we had left it alone it would have been used by the other side in a war. It could have lasted for centuries but we blew it up." We may ask: What is there to choose, in terms of benefits to humanity, between the work of a saboteur and an accountant's clerk?

Perhaps that question is best answered in the words of another character in the film, a British officer who witnesses the Bridge's end. When it is all over he comes down to the river and looks at the destruction and the Japanese and British lying dead around him. He is furious with it all. "Madness!" he cries, "Madness!"

IVAN.

"I AM GOING TO HAVE BREAKFAST IN BED"

One day in November at the Royal Albert Hall 1,250,000 poppy petals were dropped from the roof at a ceremony attended by the Queen.

"One for every British serviceman killed in action from August, 1914 till today," says the Sunday paper.

Twelve years have passed since the end of World War II. This allows fair time for Generals and "Statesmen" to retire to the safe security of their generous pensions, and eventually "die in bed," as Sassoon wrote in the first lot.

Those holding top-jobs then, can now blow the gaff, give the game away, always providing, of course, that it exonerates them and incriminates the others.

Despite the shocking straits to which inflation is supposed to have reduced the rich, there are still a few with 25s., 35s. or 45s. to chuck away on some bag of tripe purporting to reveal war time secrets.

This makes it quite a tasty racket, especially if you've nothing much else to do except fish salmon or grow cacti.

More than one ex-general has turned to tales out of the War Cabinet school, for a little bit of extra.

Actually, they've really nothing much to say. It may have taken a little longer, but the pattern of recrimination after the Second approximates to those of the First.

Then it was Lloyd George sacking Douglas Haig, this time Churchill doing Wavell. (Threatening "to have him shot."). After Churchill himself had saturated the market with whitewash, there was a chance for smaller fry to lick up a crumb or two.

Lord Alanbrooke and Sir John Kennedy (Director of Military Operations 1940-43) are among those for whom the pen is now meatier than the sword.

Kennedy, in his book *The Business of War*, 25s. (was ever a book better named?), reveals what took place at the week-end parties at Chequers, the P.M.'s country residence from which the War was actually run.

If his tale is to be believed, the dining and wining was usually accompanied by sundry angry outbursts by

Churchill denouncing and upbraiding the daft generals in charge of the British Armies.

His chagrin at Wavell's inability to deal with Rommel did not prevent him, it seems from doing justice to the liquor. "Churchill continuously called for more champagne" (while the men in the Western Desert were drinking their shaving water). "He remarked that it was very good stuff—he said he had thought of giving up cigars until the Germans were out of Cyrenaica—but changed his mind a few days later. Why should he give up cigars or snuff for any German." (*Evening Standard*, November 4th, 1957.)

On May 26th the Prime Minister sent Wavell a stream of telegrams urging "active measures," read head-long attacks.

"Victory in Crete is essential," "Hurl reinforcements into Crete." "What about a stroke in the Western Desert," etc.

According to this General, the Prime Minister was in the habit of telephoning junior officers at M.I.5, or some other secret war department and enquiring, behind the back of those in charge, how things were going. It was somewhat after the manner in which the late Mr. A. W. Gamage used to snoop on his staff at his store.

"At the evening at Chequers," Kennedy says "After dinner Churchill walked up and down."

"My plan for winning the war is this," he said a little later, "One thousand tons of bombs a night on Germany—we are only averaging 50 now—and 20,000 tanks or so ready to land all along the coasts of Europe."

"At about 3 a.m. Churchill announced that it was time for bed, and coming up to me, he said, "I am going to have breakfast in bed—I advise you to do the same."

"I certainly came out of this evening very badly," says General Kennedy.

Eventually Churchill did sack Wavell and placed Auchinleck in charge.

When the tumult and the shouting dies, a little bit of the truth comes out. We are afforded a glimpse of what went on behind the scenes, through the cracks.

That great military strategist Churchill, like his Russian counterpart the self-appointed military genius Stalin (not to mention Zhukov) has been debunked by the generals. The same thing went on in Germany with Hitler and his generals. Churchill's empty threats to have Wavell shot were obviously inspired by German practice and Nazi usage. Churchill was the more fortunate because generals who know that they are to be shot as political scapegoats, try to blow Fuhrers up with bombs.

Even appreciating attempts by wartime generals to do a Mark Antony on Winston Ceasar Churchill, our

knowledge of the intrigues of the First World War, and the events in the enemy camp during the Second bear out the substance of the case.

While Hitler, Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt were sacking generals in their blind fumbblings to find a winner, like an old lady doing football pools with a darning needle, thousands of ordinary working folk were enduring the unspeakable horrors of modern war.

What are the qualifications for these "great men" except cold calculation, tireless loquacity, and a supreme egotism based on endless contempt for those who produce the wealth they so wantonly squander.

Like Napoleon, who is supposed to have exclaimed as his heavily loaded Guardsmen sank into the icy Beresina, "Look how these toads struggle for their miserable lives," he rates the working man at his own evaluation.

The spectacle of this phrase-monger, with his old brandy and choice cigars, at a time when his own experts declared that the war time ration of those doing the work had reached the limit; uttering wild statements at his dinner parties at Chequers, like his—

"My plan is to drop 1,000 tons of bombs a night on Germany."

"I am going to have breakfast in bed." Sixteen years later, when it has now got to the stage where some "Leader-Genius" or the other can exterminate an entire community by pressing a button, there are still far too many working people supporting poppy dropping and Remembrance days. Although they may have the very best motives, they unwittingly support capitalist-Nationalism and the system which keeps them in Poverty and Peril, while generals denounce and expose politicians in past wars but not future ones.

Small comfort to the widow, great consolation to those children whose father happened to be one of the pawns (they call them "the prices") that we paid a penny or two for a paper poppy, or stood still for two minutes on Sunday, when most of us are off work, so that the gov'nor doesn't lose the time.

The folly is to continue, after all this, one and a quarter million dead, plus all the illness, disease, and aftermath of war to go on supporting capitalism whether Churchill's, Eisenhower's or Khrushchev's.

In the world Socialist society people will not kill each other—they will help each other.

Until that day the sacrifice of those killed in wars will be futile.

HORATIO.

ODDS AND ENDS

5,000 Roubles to Win

Rumour has it that another Purge is on the way in Soviet Russia. No! It's not likely to be Khrushchev or Gromyko. Its going to be those wicked jockeys at the Moscow race course.

According to *Sovetskaya Kultura* not only are students and young workers losing their money—and, more important—taking time off from work and study, but it appears, some of the jockeys have been "fixing" the races and making fortunes by betting on certain winners. But this is not all! Some of the Muscovite

tipsters have been tipping losers, much to the consternation of the punters. And besides that the officials at the Moscow race course, it seems, have been violating the law by selling "hard liquor."

Such wicked "bourgeois" goings-on! And in a "Socialist" country!—so the Communists tell us. Like workers in Britain who think they can emancipate themselves by having a little "flutter" on the 2.30 or filling-in a football coupon, the Russian workers also think that betting will get them out of their poverty position.

It looks as though Russia will soon be going to the

dogs!

Where do they find the cash?

In this fairy-land of the Welfare State, the *News Chronicle* has discovered a class of people who can afford to pay between £5 and £10 at the hairdressers; who live in apartments where the rent is between £5,000 and £10,000 a year—plus ground rent and service costs of £600 to £7,000 a year; and who own a Rolls Royce or a Jaguar costing £5,600.

The *News Chronicle* then tells us that "of around 23 million working-people in Britain, nearly 20 million are wage-earning. And as most of us know, on a pay-as-you-earn tax system, wage-earners never see quite a whack of their pay packets." (21/10/57.)

After discovering the rich—the class that enjoys all these luxuries—the *Chronicle* asks:—

"Now where do the rich people who keep these markets going get their money? And how?"

Now this is where the Socialist can help the *News Chronicle*. We have been explaining how, and where, the rich—the capitalist class—get their money for a long time. The rich get their money through the exploitation of the working-class; from the unpaid labour of the workers. In a given period the workers produce more than they receive back in wages or salaries. They produce a surplus—what Marx called "surplus value," which is the basis of rent, interest and profit. And because the rich own the means of living—i.e., the land, factories, etc., through share and stock holding, and the workers own little or nothing of these means of life, they remain the rich, become more and more prosperous during boom periods, and are able to afford all the luxuries that the *News Chronicle* speaks of; whilst most of us have to put up with the 10 guinea suits or a cheap 'perm.'

One wonders how long the workers will let this state of affairs remain as it is.

Marx and Christianity

The somewhat lengthy correspondence in the SOCIALIST STANDARD on religion has prompted this writer to read again the early writings of Marx on Christianity. Although he had far from developed his ideas and attitudes towards the then developing capitalist society, and although today his writings read a little archaic, his views on the Christian religion are more than valid today. In 1847, writing in the *Deutsche Brüsseler Zeitung*, he says: "The social principles of Christianity justified slavery in the classic world and they glorified mediaeval serfdom, and if necessary they are quite willing to defend the oppression of the proletariat even if they should wear a somewhat crestfallen appearance the while. The social principles of Christianity preach the necessity of a ruling and an oppressed class, and all they have to offer to the latter is the pious wish that the former be charitable. The social principles of Christianity transfer the reparation of all infamies to the realms of heaven and thus they justify the perpetuation of these infamies on earth. The social principles of Christianity declare that all the villainies of the oppressors against the oppressed are either the just punishment for original or other sin, or tribulations which God in his inscrutable wisdom causes the elect to suffer. The social principles of Christianity preach cowardice, self-abasement, resignation, submission and humility—" (quoted from *Karl Marx* by Franz Meking, p. 131.)

The principles of Socialism teach courage, confidence, pride and the understanding of capitalism and the need for a new system of society—Socialism.

Marx and the Trade Unions

The following merits repetition:—

"... the very development of modern industry must progressively turn the scale in favour of the capitalist against the working man, and that consequently the general tendency of capitalist production is not to raise but to sink the average standard of wages, or to push the value of labour more or less to its minimum limit. Such being the tendency of things in this system, is this saying that the working class ought to renounce their resistance against the encroachments of capital, and abandon their attempts of making the best of the occasional chances for their temporary improvement? If they did, they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation. . . .

At the same time, and quite apart from the general servitude involved in the wages system, the working class ought not to exaggerate to themselves the ultimate workings of these every-day struggles. They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing the direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand that, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the material conditions and the social forms necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the Conservative motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work," they ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wages system!" . . .

Trade unions work well as centres of resistance against the encroachments of capital. They fail partially from an injudicious use of their power. They fail generally from limiting themselves to a guerilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it, instead of using their organised forces as a lever for the final emancipation of the working class, that is to say, the ultimate abolition of the wages system." (*Value, Price and Profit*, pp. 92-94.)

PETER E. NEWELL.

"World of Plenty"—a Correction

While we do not think it likely that any reader will have misunderstood the last paragraph in the article "World of Plenty" in the November SOCIALIST STANDARD, the wording should have made it clear that articles produced under Socialism will not be "commodities" since that term applies to articles produced for sale.

Also the phrase "working classes" should, of course be "working class." This had been noticed in the original but the error was overlooked in the proof.

ED. COMM.

A SOCIAL CRITIC IN THE THEATRE

NO playwright has been "in the news," in the popular sense, of recent times to the extent of Arthur Miller. His personal contact with two of America's most famous institutions; Miss Marilyn Monroe and the Un-American Activities Committee, has put him before the public gaze in a way that his ability as a writer would not. But for this we might hazard that his name would never have moved beyond the small and inconspicuous criticism. It would be a pity if his achievements as a dramatic writer were obscured by his more publicised activities. This, even at the risk of appearing ungallant to Miss Monroe.

Writers of Mr. Miller's abilities are rare, and those who combine them with a zest for social criticism are even rarer. Arthur Miller therefore is a controversial playwright. He believes in the Theatre as a social force, and deals with certain subjects in a way that might easily incur him the censure of many of those people whom he approaches as an artist.

Such a position for the playwright is far more precarious than for the novelist behind the printed page; the novelist has a public, but no audience, whereas the playwright standing (albeit metaphorically) in full view of them, is *on trial* for his artistic life and living. For people are less likely to accept what they see and hear as a group, than what they read as individuals.

Among American playwrights of the present day, Arthur Miller occupies a high place. His first successful play *All My Sons* (1947) was an indictment of war-profiteering and the philosophy of self-interest. Two years later he wrote *Death of a Salesman*. Here Miller sets out to show the contradiction between what many Americans think and the way they actually live. The "Salesman," Willi Laman, is a failure who, when he is not lamenting his fate, is extolling the virtues of "go-getting," "know-how," and all the other baubles of American jingoism. It is a virulent condemnation of the American way of life with its fetish of personal success at the expense of other values, and well exemplifies the way people can make a religion of social dogma.

When Mr. McCarthy was at his most ebullient (1953) Arthur Miller used the circumstances of a previous witch-hunt in American history, that which occurred at Salem, Massachusetts in 1692, to illustrate in *The Crucible* how a whole community can be disrupted by fear, ignorance and superstition combined with official dogmatism. The analogy with the Senator from Wisconsin and his inquisition is unmistakably obvious. Here is the same tight-lipped philosophy, the same calculated fanaticism depicted in the character of Deputy Governor Danforth that we have come to associate with McCarthy.

Arthur Miller's dramatic essay, *A View from the Bridge*, has recently been seen in this country. It is doubtful whether those who do not belong to Theatre clubs such as the 'Arts,' will have the opportunity of seeing it, owing to the restrictions imposed by the law.

That Arthur Miller is no Socialist need not be stressed here. Social critic though he is, there is nothing that could even remotely be considered revolutionary in his work. Nevertheless, writers of his stamp do help to ease the dead weight of social complacency. Even if

it is only fractional and relatively of little significance, they at least make a visit to the Theatre more exciting for us than most. We experience the cool breeze of dissent as opposed to the stifling humidity of unpromising acceptance.

Like many famous writers before him, Arthur Miller has at one time gone the "way of a transgressor" and courted the perils of the road to Moscow. Like them, he has suffered the pain of disillusionment, which has left him a wiser, though not we hope, a sadder man. In his own words, "I had to go to hell to meet the devil."

Unlike them, it is to be sincerely hoped that he will continue in, and develop his aim as a social critic, at the same time enriching the world of drama, and not sit at home with despair on the other side of the fire grate; like Arthur Koestler—waiting for the white mushroom-shaped cloud.

I.D.J.

WAKE UP! AND LIVE

"Soviet scientists who claim to have found a Rip Van Winkle sleep method of prolonging animal life far beyond normal expectation, are to start experimenting on humans.

Their biggest success in experiments so far is a small white lapdog called Mika. He was brought to them in 1950, aged 16, with all the symptoms of advanced senility, and was expected to die at any moment.

Long sleep.

Mika was immediately put to sleep with drugs and not awakened for three months. The dog lived until April 1957, claim the Russians, nearly seven years above his normal life expectation.

The Soviet scientists stumbled on the method while carrying out experiments investigating the devastating effect of lack of sleep on the living organism. So far experiments have been on animals only. Work on humans is to be carried out at the Longevity Institute of the Moscow Medical Academy." (*Sunday Express*, 23/6/57).

The writer has long been aware of the devastating effect on his own and other people's health of the vicious scream of the alarm clock, forcing one out of a nice comfortable bed, blinded with sleep; to stumble downstairs, snatch a hurried "cuppa" and race for the bus; to arrive exhausted at the place of work, to do another "stint" of profit-making for the boss. What a lousy life!

Spare a thought, however, for the poor capitalist. Maybe he has been making a mistake. Perhaps if these experiments prove successful he may realise it. Indeed, he may campaign for a shorter working day so that wage-slaves may get more sleep, live longer and produce more profits. They may even raise the retirement age to ninety—that would save them millions! "A delightful thought, eh! Ponsonby?" "Why yes, my dear feller!" On the other hand, the workers, given more time to think, may get wise to the swindle of Capitalism and decide to put an end to "Wage Slavery," and to live long and happy lives in a Socialist society. They may, indeed, WAKE UP AND LIVE. PHIL MELLOR.

(Continued from page 178)

those awful pictures of poor creatures in space-suits with tubes in their nostrils. If they have hearts at all, dogs will organize against further cruelty by man to men.

ROBERT COSTER.

DEBATE

PEACE PLEDGE UNION

v.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

"Should we support PACIFISM or the S.P.G.B. in order to achieve enduring peace?"

For S.P.G.B.: D. M. D. LA TOUCH

For P.P.U.: TERENCE CHIVERS.

LAURIE ARMS, CRAWFORD PLACE
(Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road)
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11th, 7.30 p.m.
Admission Free

PUBLIC MEETING

DENISON HOUSE

VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD, S.W.1 (Victoria)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1st, 7 p.m.

"THE FUTURE OF BEVAN"

Speaker: E. WILMOT

Admission Free

Questions and Discussion

DEBATE

at

DENISON HOUSE, VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD
(Near Victoria Station)

on SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15th at 7 p.m.

SOCIALIST LABOUR PARTY

v.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

"Which Party Should the Working Class Support?"

S.L.P.: ALAN TOMKINS

S.P.G.B.: C. MAY

DOCUMENTARY FILMS at HEAD OFFICE

Documentary Films followed by brief Socialist comments at H.Q.

52, CLAPHAM HIGH STREET, S.W.4.
(near Clapham North Tube Station)

Every Sunday evening at 7.30 p.m.

The meeting is then open for questions and discussion which can be continued in the Social Room afterwards when light refreshments will be on sale. Visitors particularly welcome.

Dec. 1st "Gold Coast Votes"—J. D'ARCY.
" 8th "They Gave him the Works"—J. EDMUNDS.
" 15th (No meeting)
" 22nd (No meeting)
" 29th (No meeting)
Jan 5th "Key to Progress"—H. ROSE.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:—

- 1 That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
- 2 That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
- 3 That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
- 4 That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
- 5 That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
- 6 That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
- 7 That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
- 8 THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

OUTDOOR PROPAGANDA

SUNDAYS

Hyde Park ... 3.30—5 p.m.

East Street (Walworth) Dec. 1st 1 p.m.

" 8th 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.

" 15th 11 a.m.

" 22nd 12 noon

" 29th 12 noon

Whitstone Pond (Hampstead) ... 11.30 a.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS

Finsbury Pavement ... Tuesdays
Tower Hill ... Thursdays at 1 p.m.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

DUNDEE GROUP—For information write to W. Elphinstone, 10, Benzie Road, Dundee.

EDINBURGH. Enquiries to A. Hollingshead, 39, Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh

MANCHESTER Sec.: J. M. Breaky, 2, Dennison Avenue, Manchester 20. 'Phone: DIDSbury 5709.

OLDHAM—Group meets Wednesdays, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

REDHILL AND REIGATE DISTRICT—C. E. Smith, 88, Chart Lane, Reigate Surrey.

SWANSEA—Enquiries to V. Brain, 17, Bryn a Wella Rd., Pencuolgi, Nr. Llanelli

EALING BRANCH XMAS PARTY

at

EALING PARK TAVERN, SOUTH EALING ROAD

(Near South Ealing Underground Station)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14th at 7.30 p.m.

Licensed Bar - Free Refreshments - Admission 2/6

GLASGOW CITY BRANCH

MEETINGS at CENTRAL HALL, BATH STREET

SUNDAYS at 7.30 p.m.

Dec. 1st "Karl Marx's Politics"—J. RICHMOND.

Dec. 8th "Labour Theory of Value," Part I—J. HIGGINS.

Dec. 15th "Labour Theory of Value," Part II—J. HIGGINS.

Dec. 22nd (Subject to be announced)—E. DARROCK.

Dec. 29th "Any Questions"—R. READ.

LETTERS FROM READERS INVITED

Our Annual Conference in April decided that a section of the SOCIALIST STANDARD be reserved for letters from readers as a regular feature. Readers are invited to send letters of comment and criticism and questions for answer. Letters should be kept as short as possible as space is limited, and the shorter the letters the larger the number that can be printed. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE.

HAMPSTEAD BRANCH DISCUSSIONS

Wednesdays, 8 p.m.

at

108, Goldhurst Terrace, Finchley Road, N.W.6.

4th December - - - - "A Visit to America"

18th December - "National Superannuation Scheme"

HACKNEY BRANCH — ECONOMICS CLASS

Wednesdays, December 4th and 18th

at 7.30 p.m.

Bethnal Green Town Hall, E.2.

Tutors: W. Read and E. Wilmott.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

BIRMINGHAM meets Thursdays, 8.0 p.m., at "Big Bull's Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, Flat 1, 23 Cambridge Road, Birmingham, 14.

BLOOMSBURY. Meets 1st and 3rd Thursdays in month (Dec. 5th and 19th) at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1., at 7.30 p.m.

BRADFORD AND DISTRICT. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Peter Hall, 10, Spring Grove Terrace, Leeds, 6, or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

CAMBERWELL meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. H. Baldwin, 32, Solon Road, Brixton, S.W.2.

DARTFORD meets every Friday at 8 p.m., Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Sec.: S. Roope, 42, Avalon Road, Orpington, Kent.

EALING Fridays at 8 p.m. sharp. Weekly at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

ECCLES meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m., at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles, Secretary, F. Lea.

FULHAM AND CHELSEA. Meet 1st and 3rd Thursdays in the month at 8 p.m. at 34, St. George's Square, (Wilcox, top flat) S.W.1. All correspondence to Secretary, c/o H. O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW (City) Communications to Sec. E. A. Darrook, 51, Plant St., Glasgow, E.1. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays (Dec. 4th and 18th) at 8 p.m., The Religious Institute Rooms, 200 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, C.1.

GLASGOW (Kilvingrove) meets alternate Mondays (Dec. 9th and 23rd) at 8 p.m. at Partick Burgh Halls, Partick. Communications to P. McKenzie, 112, Cardness Road, Dumbarton.

HACKNEY meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m., at Bethnal Green Town Hall (Patriot Square entrance). Sec.: A. H. Wood, 84, Millfield Ave., Walthamstow, E.17.

HAMPSTEAD Enquiries to F. Webb, 52, Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware. Branch meets alternate Wednesdays at 8 p.m. Dec. 4th and 18th, 108c, Goldhurst Terrace, (near Finchley Road, Hampstead, N.W.6.

ISLINGTON meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. Doherty, 36, Finsbury Park Road, N.4.

KINGSTON-ON-THAMES Sec., 19, Spencer Road, East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6462). Branch meets Thursday at 8 p.m. at above address.

LEWISHAM meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. P. Hart, 22, Great Elms Road, Bromley. Tel. Rav. 7811.

NOTTINGHAM meets 1st Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

PADDINGTON meets Wednesdays, 8.0 p.m. The Laurie Arms, Crawford Place, (Off Edgware Road, adjacent to Marylebone Road), W.1. Discussion after Branch business. Sec. C. May, 1, Hanover Road, N.W.10.

SOUTHEND 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 17, Cotswold Road, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex. Enquiries to Sec. J. G. Gisleay, at that address.

TOTTENHAM meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, S. Hills 1, Devonshire Road, Tottenham, N.17.

WEST HAM meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussions after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to F. J. Mann, 18 Larchwood Ave., Romford, Essex. Romford 5171.

WICKFORD meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m., "Skara Brae" Farm Crescent, Woodham Road, Battlesbridge, Essex. Enquiries to Secretary, L. R. Plummer.

WOOD GREEN AND HORNSEY Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m., Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 118, Felham Road, Wood Green, N.22.

WOOLWICH meets 2nd and 4th Friday of month, 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business (8 p.m.). Sec. H. C. Ramsey, 9, Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

ISLINGTON BRANCH

CO-OP HALL, 129, SEVEN SISTERS ROAD, N.7

Meet every Thursday at 8 p.m.

LECTURES

December 5th - - "The Roman Catholic Church"

—B. COSTER.

January 2nd - - Independent Labour Party
Secretary—Wilfred Wigham.